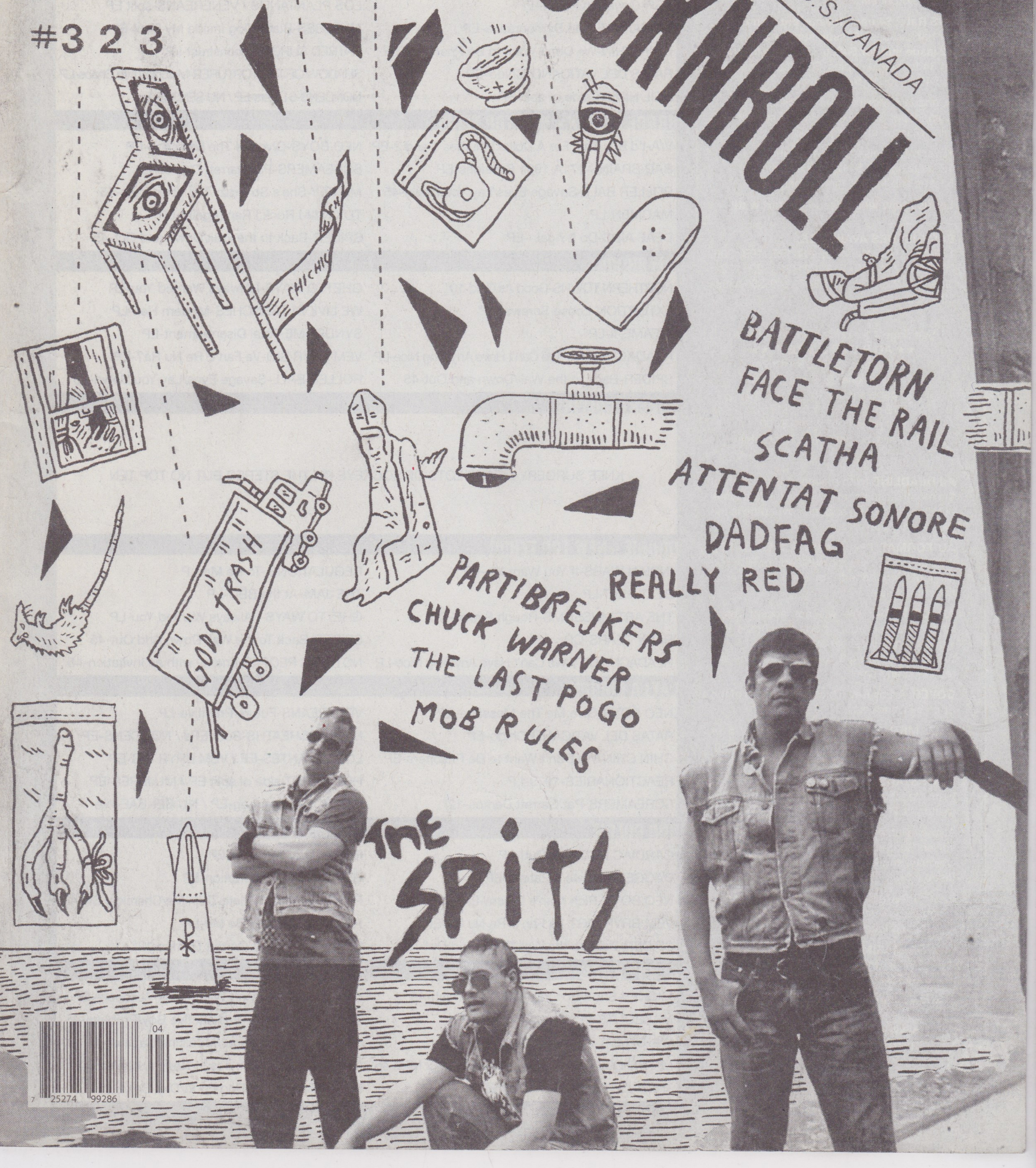
MAXIMUM ROCKNROLL

#323
APRIL 2010
$4 U.S./CANADA



BATTLETORN
FACE THE RAIL
SCATHA
ATTENTAT SONORE
DADFAG
REALLY RED
PARTIBREJKERS
CHUCK WARNER
THE LAST POGO
MOB RULES

THE SPITS

MAXIMUMROCKNROLL TOP 10

For what it's worth, here's some of the MRR reviewers' current Top 10 (or so) things we've reviewed this month.

MARIAM BASTANI

SSR-Orwellian Future-EP
RUMANIA-Fiesta Democrática-EP
CHIN CHIN-We Don't Want to Be Prisoners-EP
RATAS DEL VATICANO-Chido-EP
HEIL HIDIOT-side of split EP
LOS PLANTANOS / VENEREANS-split EP
MUJERES-Black Dog Inside My Soul-EP
HATRED SURGE-Deconstruct-LP
SHADOW OF THE TORTURER-Marching Into Chaos-LP
NONCENS-6 Laters-EP / NU SENSAE-live

BRACE BELDEN – NEW TOP TEN!!!

V/A-I'd Buy That For A Dollar Volumes 1 and 2-EP
BAD BRAINS-171A 1981 Sessions-EP
ROLLER BALL-Savage Eyes/Lay You.Down-45
MADMEN-LP
DEAF AIDS-Do It Again-EP
NEO BOYS-Give Me The Message-EP
SCREAMERS-Pat Garrett Demos-LP
MICKEY-She's So Crazy/I'm Your Trash-45
TOXIN III-I Rock I Ran (Again)-LP
SPIDER-Back to the Wall/Down and Out-45

TIM BROOKS

NORTHERN TOWNS-Good As Gold-10"
EXTORTION-Loose Screws-10"
INFAME-II-LP
HEADACHE CITY-We Can't Have Anything Nice-LP
SPIDER-Back to the Wall/Down and Out-45
GHETTO WAYS-I Always Wanted You-LP
WE LIVE IN TRENCHES-Modern Hex-LP
SYNDROME-Total Disarmament-EP
VEM BRYR SIG-Va Fan E Re Nu Rå?-EP
ROLLER BALL-Savage Eyes/Lay You Down-45

ROBERT COLLINS

KNEE SURGERY MEANS LOTS OF SOCKEYE ON THE STEREO BUT NO TOP TEN

DOUGIE – NEW TOP TEN!!!!

INDIAN WARS-If You Want Me-EP
BEAT BEAT-LP
THE ART MUSEUMS-Rough Frame-CD
BABY TEARS-CD
HEADACHE CITY-We Can't Have Anything Nice-LP
REGULATIONS–To Be Me-LP
THE JAM–At the BBC-LP
GHETTO WAYS-I Always Wanted You-LP
SPIDER-Back To the Wall/Down And Out-45
NOTHING PEOPLE-Enemy with an Invitation-45

LAYLA GIBBON

NEO BOYS-Give Me The Message-EP
RATAS DEL VATICANO-Chido-EP
CHIN CHIN-We Don't Want to Be Prisoners-EP
REACTIONARIES-1979-LP
SCREAMERS-Pat Garrett Demos-12"
VENEREANS-Future Primitive-LP
MYELIN SHEATHS-Both EPs / NONCENS-EP
LOS LAXANTES-EP / VEM BRYR SIG-EP
HEIL HIDIOT-side of split EP / MUJERES-EP
WETDOG-Lower Leg-EP / NU SENSAE-live

BOB GOLDIE

CARDIAC KIDZ-Get Out!-LP
DAGGERS-Ponte a Patinar-EP
NEO BOYS-Rich Man's Dream-EP
VEM BRYR SIG?-Va Fan E Re Nu Rå-EP
SPIDER-Back to the Wall/Down and Out-45
RF7-Acts of Defiance-EP
UNFUN-Pain Prescription-EP
POWERCHORDS-More Than Me/Chemical Girl-45
REGULATIONS-To Be Me-LP
SCREAMERS-Pat Garrett Demos-12"

KENNY KAOS

MICKEY-She's So Crazy/I'm Your Trash-45
MAKEOUTS-In a Strange Land-LP
V/A-Denton, Denton USA-LP
MARVELOUS DARLINGS-The Only Ones For Miles-45
THE HUSSY/ZYGOTEENS-split EP
CHIN CHIN-We Don't Want to Be Prisoners-EP
MODERN ACTION-Radioactive Boy/Problem-45
READIES-Mink Dagger/Medicine Cabinet-45
CROCODILES-Neon Jesus/Neon Autobahn-45
BARRERACUDAS-Dog Food/Diet Coke-45

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Let us know which issue to start with!

BACK ISSUES AVAILABLE: 179-181, 184, 186-192, 194-197, 199, 206, 208-209, 211-215, 218, 221-223, 225. 227, 229-231, 233-236, 238-247, 249-306, 308-320, 322

See page 4 for pricing and other info.

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TOP 10

Please send two copies of vinyl, CD-only, or demo releases to the address on the previous page

CAROLYN KEDDY

RATAS DEL VATICANO-Chido-EP	MYELIN SHEATHS-Both EPs
MICKEY-She's So Crazy/I'm Your Trash-45	V/A-Our Boy Roy-LP
NERVE CITY-LP + EP	CHIN CHIN-We Don't Want to Be Prisoners-EP
V/A-I'd Buy That For A Dollar Volumes 1 and 2-EP	ROLLERBALL-45 / SPIDER-45
NATIVE CATS-Cats Paw/Lemon Juice-45	BARRERACUDAS-45 / RAY MILLAND-CD

RAY LUJAN

THE 99ERS-And The There Was Surf-CD	POWERCHORDS-More Than Me/Chemical Girl-45
ART MUSEUMS-Rough Frame-CD	MY MIND-EP / MARVELOUS DARLINGS-45
NOTHING PEOPLE-Enemy with an Invitation-45	NORTON-CD / LAST COMMUNION-LP
CHIN CHIN-We Don't Want to Be Prisoners-EP	HEADACHE CITY-We Can't Have Anything Nice-LP
MYELIN SHEATHS-Mental Twist-EP	BUZZCOCKS-LIVE / THE DAMNED-LIVE

MARK MURRMANN

DRUID PERFUME-Don't Eat 'Em They're Poison-45	LOS LAXANTES-No No No No-EP
SCREAMERS-Pat Garrett Demos-LP	ROLLER BALL-Savage Eyes/Lay You Down-45
READIES-Mink Dagger/Medicine Cabinet-45	SPIDER-Back to the Wall/Down and Out-45
RATAS DEL VATICANO-Chido-EP	V/A-I'd Buy That For A Dollar Volumes 1 and 2-EP
BARRERACUDAS-Dog Food/Diet Coke-45	CHIN CHIN-We Don't Want to Be Prisoners-EP

BRUCE ROEHRS

BOILING OVER-Trash City-EP	SSR-Orwellian Future-EP
SOTATILA-Vituiks Meni-EP	HAMMERLOCK-Live on public TV
SYNDROME-Total Disarmament-EP	MADMEN-LP
CHUCK DAMAGE-LP	ANTIMOB/BURIAL-split EP
FOR THE WORSE/WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES-EP	EXTORTION-Loose Screws-10"

KEN SANDERSON – NEW TOP TEN!!!!

CONFLICT RESOLUTION-American Internment-EP	EXTORTION-Loose Screws-10"
HATRED SURGE-Deconstruct-LP	MADMEN-LP
SOTATILA-Vituiks Meni-EP	LOS LAXANTES-No No No No-EP
REACTIONARIES-1979-LP	SYNDROME-Total Disarmament-EP
RUMANIA-Fiesta Democrática-EP	GEPØPEL-EP / FY FAN-CD

FRED SCHRUNK

SCREAMERS-Pat Garrett Demos-LP	LOS PLANTANOS / VENEREANS-split EP
GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE-It Wasn't Made For Us-EP	HEADACHE CITY-We Can't Have Anything Nice-LP
UNFUN-Pain Prescription-EP	REGULATIONS–To Be Me-LP
THE HUSSY/ZYGOTEENS-split EP	CHIN CHIN-We Don't Want to Be Prisoners-EP
HEIL HIDOT/WEEKEND WARRIOR-split EP	REACTIONARIES-1979-LP

MARTIN SORRONDEGUY

INFAME-II-LP	DEJANGRADOS / AMARGO-EP
RATAS DEL VATICANO-Chido-EP	SYNDROME-Total Disarmament-EP
LOS LAXANTES-No No No No-EP	RUMANIA-Fiesta Democrática-EP
SSR-Orwellian Future-EP	SOTATILA-Vituiks Meni-EP
LOS PLANTANOS / VENEREANS-split EP	REACTIONARIES-1979-LP

ZINE TOP TEN

Nuts! #3 + #4	*Kid Cutbank #3*
Burn Collector #14	*Chilena Comando #6*
Self-defense for Radicals	*Screaming at a Wall #3*
Wet Cement #2	*Classy People #2*
Mycoffinhands #2	*The Second Skin of Cities*

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A WHOLE CRAPLOAD OF MRR BACK ISSUES...

#179/April '98. Boy Sets Fire, Tres Kids, Idyls, Spat & The Guttersnipes, The Posers, Explosive Kate, Douche Flag.

#180/May '98. Reinforce, Discontent, TV Killers, Slack Action, Eyeliners, Mademoiselle, MK Ultraviolence, Haulin' Ass, 97a, Infiltrators, Jack Saints, Stray Bullets.

#181/June '98. Grapefruit, Druggies, DDI, Bonecrusher, Normals, All Bets Off, Stiletto Boys, Summerjack, Cell Block 5.

#184/Sept '98. Absentees, Devoid of Faith, UXA, Ümlaut, Four Letter Word, Streetwalkin' Cheetahs, Ricanstruction, Libertine, Indecision, Snarkout Boys.

#186/Nov '98. Registrators, August Spies, Marilyn's Vitamins, Chinese Love Beads.

#187/Dec '98. Real Kids, Sawn Off, Cretins, Spider Cunts, Heroines, 3rd Party, No Class.

#188/Jan '99. Stitches, Neighbors, Mansfields, Real Swinger, Marauders, Mark Bruback, Mars Moles, DOA.

#189/Feb '99. Monster X, Peter & the Test Tube Babies, Steam Pig, Maurauders, Yakuza, Dead Beat, Halfways, Hot Rod Honeys, DeRita Sisters.

#190/Mar '99. John Holstrom, Powerhouse, Brezhnev, Slappy, Black Pumpkin, Smartbomb.ca, Wanda Chrome, Long Gones, Smogtown, Halfways, Tilt.

#191/April '99. Murder Suicide Pact, Kil Kare, Dudman, Super Hi-Fives, Better Than Elvis DJs, Pet Peeves, Loose Ends, Slingshot Episode.

#192/May '99. Los Crudos, Burning Kitchen, Henry Fiat's Open Sore, Polythene, Kangaroo Recs.

#194/July '99. Deathreat, Last Match, God Hates Computers, Fokkewolf, Flesh Eating Creeps, Aside, Hoppin' Mad, Kid Dynamite, Thee Outcasts.

#195/Aug '99. Moral Crux, RC5, Have Nots, Ill Tempered, Dysentery, Greg Higgins, Revlons, Larry & the Gonowheres.

#196/Sept '99. Hopscotch, Catharsis, Orchid, The Pricks, Grissle, Product X, Reaching Forward, Emerge, Third Degree, "Epicenter Zone '90-'99".

#197/Oct '99. Reducers SF, Lower Class Brats, Reactor 7, TheGodsHateKansas, Futuro Incierto, Showcase Showdown, Waifle, Flat Earth Recs.

#208/Sept '00. Le Shok, the Commies, the Chemo Kids, Day of Mourning, Affront, Diaspora, Whippersnapper, Hopeless/Sub City, Prank, Countdown to Oblivion

#209/Oct '00. Loose Lips, Godstomper, Peace of Mind, FYP, I Farm, Annalise, Cattle Decapitation, Riot/Clone.

#214/Mar '01. Crispus Attucks, Fetish, Lifes Halt, Mr. Roboto, Dream Dates, Satan McNugget, Havoc, Briefs.

#215/April '01. No Means No, Vitamin X, Injections, Y, Dils, Last In Line, Don Austin, Deranged Records

#218/July '01. Guyana Punchline, Les Sexareenos, The Devil Is Electric, Red Monkey, White Collar Crime, Forca Macabra, The Ataris, Suicide, The Mob

#221/Oct '01. The G8 Summit, Reflections, Soophie Nun Squad, Totalitär, True North, Wontons, Sin Dios, Bottles & Skulls, Scarred For Life, Flowers in the Dustbin, Remains of the Day, Ritchie Whites, B'67.

#222/Nov '01. Dios Hastio, Tragedy, Four Letter Word, *Salad Days* author Charles Romalotti, Very Metal, Maurice's Little Bastards, the Rotters, MDC Brazilian tour diary, the Cravats, JR Ewing, Dutch scene, extended news section, "Globalization Rhetoric & Reality."

#223/Dec '01. "US Policy in the Middle East," "Revisiting 1948," Manifesto Jukebox, Good Riddance, Pokers, Viimenen Kolonna, Bluebloods, Vitamin X tour diary, Flakes, Pg. 99, the Mob, 7 Days of Samsara.

#225/Feb '02. Lengua Armada, Breaker Breaker, 3 Yrs. Down, Scrotum Grinder, Turun Tauti, Flux Of Pink Indians, Holding On, Pauki, 86'd, See You In Hell, Red Light Sting, Nazis From Mars, Scare Tactic.

#227/Apr '02. Bellrays, Rhinos, Wasted, Kristofer Pasanen, Business, Assert, DS 13 tour report, Life Set Struggle, Iowaska, Zounds.

#229/June '02. Countdown To Putsch, The Awakening, Dave Hill Distribution, Holier Than Thou, Kill Devil Hills, Sound Of Failure, E.T.A., Nubs, Les Baton Rouge, New Disorder Records, Career Suicide, Swellbellys, The Sinyx.

#230/July '02. Bitchin', Redencion 911, Phantom Limbs, Secretions, Holy Molar, Sharp Knife, Mighty John Waynes, A Global Threat, Groovie Ghoulies, Reproach, Annie Anxiety.

#231/Aug '02. Epoxies, Puppy Vs. Dyslexia, Koro, Blocko, Amdi Petersen's Armé, Piss & Vinegar Zine, Schizophrenic Records, Toys That Kill, Give Us Barabbas, Dirt.

#233/Oct '02. "All Ages" article, Scholastic Deth, Runnamucks, Sinners & Saints, Panic, Gasolheads, Jewws, Futures, Michael Landon's Commandos, Storm the Tower, Against Me!, Balance of Terror, Class Assassins, Spazm 151.

#234/Nov '02. Snobs, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour, The Oath, Radio 4, Feederz, Charm City Suicides, Selfish, Riot 99, End On End, Peawees, Born/Dead.

#235/Dec '02. Anti-war Special Issue. Articles: "Reading for Democracy," "War on Iraq?" "Unfinished American Revolution." Resource Guide, "US Involvement in Iraq,""Axis of Empire." Long Island DIY Scene, What Happens Next? Brazilian tour part 2, Smalltown, Kylesa, Crash & Burn.

#236/Jan '03. Mr. California & State Police, Iron Lung, Riff Randells, Chainsaw, *Artcore*, Latterman, Travis Cut, Phenomenauts, Pretty Little Flower, X-Cretas.

#238/Mar '03. World Burns To Death, Chronics, Vilently Ill, Dystopia, Pilger, Exotic Fever, Brezhnev, R.A.M.B.O., Blown To Bits, Put To Shame, Deconditioned, This Bike Is A Pipe Bomb, Monsters.

#239/Apr '03. Romanian D-beat, Meconium Records, Amazombies, Abandoned Hearts Club, Mike V. & the Rats, Nicki Sicki, Bigamists, Bolivia article, Negatives, Kuolema, Defiance.

#240/May '03. I Quit, Apers, Headless Horsemen, Lesser of Two, Barse, Nightmare, Music Zine Roundtable, Exploding Hearts, Flesh Packs, Blacklist Brigade.

#241/June '03. Tyrades, Lumbergh, The Stand By Me, New Mexican Disaster Squad, Cut the Shit, Libertinagem, 17th Class, the Ends, He Who Corrupts, Deathbag, Cria Cuervos.

#242/July '03. Pensacola & San Francisco punk protest reports, John Wilkes Booze, Anfo, Bob Suren, Migra Violenta, Jackson 8, *Snakepit* zine, Krigshot, the Rites, Deadfall.

#243/Aug '03. "Media Alliance and the FCC," Striking Distance, Malcontents, Invisible City, Books Lie, Charm City Art Space, Hopeless Dregs of Humanity, I Shot Cyrus, Sunday Morning Einsteins, What the Kids Want, Onion Flavored Rings.

#244/Sept '03. None More Black, Deadline, Rai Ko Ris, Boxed In, Exploding Hearts, Raving Mojos, Blackout Terror, Morticia's Lovers, Thee Fine Lines, *Trust* zine.

#245/Oct '03. No Time Left, Riistetyt, Intense Youth, The Gimmies, Ass End Offend, Artimus Pyle, La Fraction, Kung Fu Rick, The Horror.

#246/Nov '03. Punk & Resistance in Israel, Letters from Palestine, No Choice, FM Knives, Bury the Living, Marked Men, The Dirty Burds, Provoked.

#247/Dec '03. DSB, The Boils, Popular Shapes, Phoenix Foundation, Bathtub Shitter, Meet the Virus, Cropknox, "Punk Babies on Tour" Article.

#248/Jan '04. Discharge, Superhelicopter, Jed Whitey, Black Friday '29, Find Him And Kill Him, The Lids, Impratical Cockpit, Face Up To It, History Of Maximum Rocknroll Radio.

#249/Feb '04. From Ashes Rise, Hagar the Womb, This Is My Fist, Skip Jensen, Gride, Katy Otto/Mike Taylor Dialogue, John Yates, Pointing Finger.

#250/Mar '04. Best Records of 2003, Miami FTAA protests, Clorox Girls, FIYA, "La Villita: Chicago Pilsen Scene," Terminus Victor, Restarts, Damage Done, Knights of New Crusade.

#251/April '04. The Fuse!, Väkivaltaa, Modern Machines, Microcosm, Migra Violenta Euro tour diary, Allegiance, Neurotic Swingers, Xavier Lepaige Photos, Le Scrawl,Vrah.

#253/June '04. Sweet J.A.P., Gorilla Angreb, Vöetsek, Minority Blues Band, Scruvy Dogs, Molotov Cocktail, Kidnappers, Schifosi, King Ly Chee, YDI.

#254/July '04. No Hope For The Kids, Dropdead, Diskords, Breakfast, Asschapel, I Excuse, Strung Up, To Hell & Back, Four Eyes, Lamant, Gammits MW, scene reports from Portland, Boston and Germany.

#255/Aug '04. "Punk's Not Dead, Reagan Is" Special Issue. Leatherface, Get It Away, The Hatepinks, Keen Monkey Work, New York City, South Dakota, Czech Republic, Philippines, Russia.

#256/Sep '04. Observers, Witchhunt, Annihilation Time, Zann, Eskapo, FxPxO, Haymarket Riot, Fourth Rotor, Les Georges Lenigrad, Texas scene, Newfoundland, Indiana, England.

#257/Oct '04 The Election Issue, Jesse Townley, Matt Gonzalez, Rattus, Fighting Dogs, Hero Dishonest, Kickz, Boss Martians, Reactionary 3, Slovakia, Australia, South Wales, South East Asia.

#258/Nov '04. Career Suicide, Cathy Wilkerson of the Weather Underground, No Fucker, The Repos, Dominatrix, Ashtray, Deadstop, Midnight Creeps, Michale Graves, The Diffs, Shemps, Abi Yo Yo's.

#259/Dec '04. Bad Business, Penelope Houston, Rambo, AI, Ass, I Attack, The Krunchies, A-Lines, Insurgence Records, The Hates, Accidents, Massgrav, The Critics, Merciless Game, SF Hotel Workers Strike, photos from Japan, SoCal & the Bay Area.

#260/Jan '05. Technocracy, The Total End, Only Crime, True North, Partisans, For The Worst, Dick Spikie, Straight to Hell, Black Cross, Action, Ergs, Rusty Nails, Queer Activism in London, Greg Shaw tribute, John Peel tribute, Andrew "Stig" Sewell tribute, Beijing punk photos.

#261/Feb '05. Year End Top Tens, Riistetyt, Lost Cherrees, Complete Control, Cheap Sex, Gasoline Please, Beerzone, Greyskull, MOTO, Water Into Beer Fanzine, Swe-Punk scumpit, Japan punk photos, Bay Area punk photos, Texas, Russia, and Malaysia scene reports.

#262/March '05. Kärnvapen Attack, Neo Boys, Catholic Boys, Dead Moon, Wreckage, Frantix, Armitage Shanks, Wendy Kroys, To What End?, Cell Block 5, Bent Outta Shape, Ah-Nah Tron, Slovakia, Indonesia, and Illinois scenes.

#263/April '05. All Crusties Spending Loud Night 2004, Bombenalarm, Battleship, APA, The Black Lips, Words That Burn, Flamingo 50, The Low Budgets, Mellakka, I Object, Antisect, Bay Area scene report, South Coast UK scene report.

#264/May '05. Crime, Love Songs, Bruce Banner, Intent, The Holy Mountain, Have Heart, The Bill Bondsmen, The Real Losers, archive photos, Bay Area scene photos, Taiwan and Rochester scene reports.

#265/June '05. Endless Nightmare, Hard Skin, Kolokol, Amebix, Transistor Transistor, The Safes, The Detonators, Finland scene report, France scene report, SoCal scene report.

#266/July '05. The Carbonas, MDC, Destrux, Unkind, Hiretsukan, Giant Haystacks, Ohuzaru, Teenage Harlets, Michigan scene report, San Diego scene report, Eugene, OR scene report, photos.

#267/August '05. Knugen Faller, Sleeper Cell, Motorama, Gulcher Records history, Army of Jesus, The Slicks, Thee Merry Widows, Rotten Sound, The Faction (UK), Czech and New Zealand scene reports.

#268/September'05. Signal Lost, Gulcher Records history part two, Teenage Bottlerocket, Mattilda (aka Matt Bernstein Sycamore), The Spectacle, Bang Sugar Bang, Chumbawamba, Reason of Insanity, Forward To Death, Flyer art, Florida Scene Report, Bay Area scene report, photos.

#269/October '05. Hammer, Desastre, Human Eye, Les Bellas, Gasmask Terror, Randy "Biscuit" Turner tribute, Stalag 17 (UK), Stepbrothers, Retching Red, Weaving the Deathbag, Gather, Chicago and SoCal scene reports.

#270/November '05. Clorox Girls European Tour, Czolgosz, Regulations, Time Flys, Taxi, No More Lies, Oi!, Paddy Costello of the Dillinger Four, Smartpils, Revenge of Mongoloid, Pisschrist, Scene reports: Puerto Rico, UK, Russia.

#271/December '05. Besthöven, Abductee SD, Tractor Sex Fatality, George Harrison, Deathtoll, Photos by icki, Ice & The Iced, the Ulcers, Chimps Eat Bananas, Deranged / Criminal IQ / Kick'n'Punch Records. Scene reports: Iowa, Maine, Illinois.

#272/January '06. Conga Fury, Let's Grow, Frustration, Bastardass, Icons of Filth, Burial, Hrydjuverk, Cranked Up!, Urrke T & the Midlife Crisis, Tropezio, *Baboon of Sickness* zine. Scene reports: Austin, France, Michigan, Larry Wolfley photos.

#273/February '06. Fuses, Endstand, Out Cold, Pedestrians, Acts of Sedition, BadEatingHabits, Western Addiction, Jesus Fucking Christ, Toxic Waste, Punk photo spread, St. Louis, USA & Brighton, UK scene reports.

#274/March '06. Best of 2005, Formaldehyde Junkies, Brutal Knights, Kansan Uutiset, Hatred Surge, A-Heads, Manikin, Upinatem, Hips, Boston scene report, Punk photo spread.

#275/April '06. History of ABC No Rio (Part One), Ringers, Missbrukarna, '90s garage punk scumpit, Anatomi-71, After the Bombs, Rubella Ballet, RIP Pig Champion, Ricky Adam interview and photographs, Sean McGhee, Hard Skin US tour diary.

#276/May '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part One), History of ABC No Rio (Part Two), Vitamin X Asian Pacific tour diary, Soviet Valves Suburban Death Machine, Frustrations, George Hurchalla, Scene reports: Czech Republic and Greece.

#277/June '06. "Is Business Killing Punk Rock?" business survey (Part Two), Imperial Leather, Boom Boom Kid, Vitamin X Asian Pacific Tour (part two), "How to Make It Big!" by the Phantom Surfers, Magrudergrind, Poland.

#278/July '06. Billy Childish, Death Token, The First Step, Ramsey Kanaan of AK Press, Headache City, Deconditioned, Under Pressure, Insuiciety, Instigators, Malaysia Scene, Bay Area Scene Pics.

#279/August '06. Mika Miko, The Fall, Cardiac Arrest, Digger & the Pussycats, Massmord, Insect Warfare, The Astronauts, Canary Islands Photo Spread, Four Slicks, The Fallout, PAWNS, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, & Umeå, Sweden scenes.

#280/September '06. Hjerte Stop, Grupo Sub-1, Desperate Bicycles, Bill Daniel interview and photo spread, APF Brigade, Disconvenience, Southkore Fest photo spread, Rosenbombs, Up the Voltage, Euro photo spread, Svartenbrandt, Asheville, NC & world wide punk scene reports.

#281/October '06. Out With a Bang, Redd Kross, Derek Lyn Plastic, We March, Alan Milman, Rat Traps, Blood Robots, The Scarred, Gilbert Switzer, Japan & US photo spreads, Sweden & UK scene reports.

#282/November '06. The Feelers, PESD, Toxic Ephex, Auktion, Bruise Violet, *Trust* fanzine, The Homosexuals, The Effigies, Rat City Riot, New York City & North Carolina scene reports.

#283/December '06. Jay Reatard interview & photos, Crimes Against Humanity Records, A Touch of Hysteria, Doris Fanzine, Kvoteringen, '90s Punk Scumpit Part II, Black Chrome, The Dirty Water Club, photos, Tokyo scene report.

#284/January '07. Margaret Thrasher, 924 Gilman at 20 Years, Order of the White Rose, Regress, Subhumans (UK) Part One, Blank Its, Condenada, Genetic Control, photos, Syracuse & San Diego scene reports.

#285/February '07. Randy "Biscuit" Turner of the Big Boys & the early Texas punk scene, Lemuria, Ruin, Subhumans (UK) Part Two, The Blinds, Tranzistors, ANS, Riot This, La Piovra, Bay Area scene pics, Barcelona, Spain scene report.

#286/March '07. Best of 2006, Smartut Kahol Lavan, Electric Kisses, Holy Shit!, Lost Cherrees Pt 1, Go!, Kraljevo, Serbia, and Bakersfield, CA scene reports.

#287/April '07. Alicja Trout, Keith Rosson (*Avow* zine), Crap Corps, The Vicious, Scum System Kill, Lost Cherrees Pt 2, Restless Youth, SBV, Australia, Kyiv, Ukraine, and Pittsburgh, PA scene reports.

#288/May '07. Clockcleaner, Pisschrist, The Rats (Sweden), Conflict (US), The Viletones, Violent Tumor, Czech Republic and East Texas scene reports.

#289/June '07. Ultimo Resorte, Kursk, Masstrauma, Social Circkle, Final Approach, Post Punk Kitchen, Southern Death Cult, Portland Drummers, Timisoara, Copenhagen, and Pampanga scene reports.

#290/July '07. Stormcrow, Merkit, Solid Decline, Monster Squad, Sex Vid, Vivisick, Warkrime, Top Ten, *We're Gonna Fight* zine, White Cross, Berlin scene report.

#291/August '07. *MRR* 25th Anniversary Issue. Martin Sprouse, Tim Yohannon, No Slogan, Ruidosa Inmundicia, Chinese Telephones, Vaseline Children, Anti-System, Dave Roche, 6-page retrospective photo-spread, Kawakami/ Disclose obituary, Brazil scene report.

#292/September '07. New Bloods, Chronic Seizure, Outraged, Geriatric Unit, Active Distribution, Gruk, The Mods, No Defences, The Fakes, Trashies Tour Report, Mexico scene report.

#293/October '07. Punk and Immigration Theme issue w/ interviews, articles, and stories. Anti-You, Loser Life, Political Asylum, Olympia scene report.

#294/November '07. The Hipshakes, Neverending Party, Punk & Immigration article, Finally Punk, La Lucha Para La Justicia en Guatemala, Leftover Crack, AOA.

#295/December '07. Surrender, What If Gods Lie?, The Crawlers, 2:20, The Joneses, Libertario Magazine, Bad Samaritans, Shrapnel, Untermensch.

#296/January '08. Hellshock, Mario Panciera, Anathema, The System, Eddy Current Suppression Ring, The Voids, Cinecyde, Kyklooppien Sukupuutto, Punch In The Face, BSA.

#297/February '08. Marie Kanger-Born, Thrillhouse Records, Contaminators, Oi Polloi, Obstruction, I Walk the Line, Utopia

#298/March '08. Best of 2007, Autistic Youth, White Lung, Karma Sutra,, Clusterfuck, Sharon Cheslow, Slaughter of the Innocent.

#299/April '08. Government Warning, Age, Off With Their Heads, Guided Cradle, Go It Alone, Fy Fan, Daily Void, Hungarian Scene history.

#300/May '08. NorCal Punk Special: Fix My Head, Black Rainbow, Tank Crimes, Young Offenders, Church Police, Traditional Fools, Six Weeks/Short Fast & Loud, Ecoli.

#301/June '08. Underground Railroad to Candyland, Straightjacket Nation, Red Dons, Spectres, Dean Dirg, Kola, Los Violadores, the Sears, Tentacles of Destruction, Antibodies, Head on Collision.

#302/July '08. Giuda, Wasted Time, Reality, Sin Orden, Teenage Head, Antidote, La Urss, Canadian Rifle, Seasick, Israel & Japan scenes.

#303/August '08. Double Negative, Burnt Cross, Masapunk, Chicago Clitfest, Intifada, Nuclear Death Terror, Raw Power, Unlovables, Waste, Chaos In Tejas photospread, Houston and Grand Rapids scene reports.

#304/September '08. Raymond Pettibon, John Stabb of Government Issue, Cola Freaks, Measure [sa], The Press, XYX, Simply Saucer, Kulturkampf, Andy T, FPO, and Columbia scene report.

#305/October '08. Pierced Arrows, Bum Kon, Deep Sleep, Diente Perro, IRA, Legion of Parasites, Reality Control, Riot City Records, Stations, Test Patterns.

#306/November '08. Brain Handle, Assassins, Diodes (pt. 1), 97 Shiki, Black Dove, No Bunny, Shellshag, Sista Sekunden, Vivian Girls, Animals And Men.

#307/December '08. SOLD OUT!!! Sorry...

#308/January '09. Punks & Film Special- with Target Video, Whatever Happened To Susan Jane, Cleveland's Screaming, Mondo Vision, After the Salad Days, You Weren't There, Botinada, Taqwacores, and more.

#309/February '09. Ooga Boogas,Mind Eraser, Cococoma, Extortion, Boyracer, Nixe, Mr. California, Deathcage, Squalora, Maniax, Null and Void, Think Fast.

#310/March '09. 2008 Year-end Top Tens. Health Issue Special–Interviews with Mikey Mind, Chris Colohan and Craig Lewis, plus tons of articles.

#311/April '09. Print Media special with Erick Lyle (Scam zine), Shit-Fi, Z-Gun, Terminal Boredom, Tales Of Blarg, John Holmstrom (Punk magazine), History of skate zines, Punk flyer art, and a dozen one-page fanzines.

#312/May '09. Criminal Damage, Never Healed, Masonics, Screaming Females, Germ Attak, Petticoats, Condominium, Passion Killers, Pioggia Nera, & the second part of the health issue.

#313/June '09. Cult Ritual, Acid Reflux, NN, Herds, Hunx and His Punx, Grass Widow, Project Hopeless, Defect Defect, Tom's Midnight Garden, Existers and scene reports from Sydney and Boston.

#314/July '09. Libyans, Coke Bust, Strange Boys, Turboslut, Vogue, Smart Cops, Zyanose, Dennis Dread, a History of Squatting in Italy, Tornonto Scene Report.

#315/August '09. Zero Boys, Skin Like Iron, Punch, The Black and Whites, Insomnio, Resist, Blank Dogs, Etacarinae, Come On, London and Brest scene reports.

#316/September '09. Amebix, Born/Dead, Divisions, Meatlocker, Something Fierce, Mutating Meltdown,Altercado, Anal Warnead, Nick Toczec, Cowley Club, Albany Scene Report.

#317/October '09. Queer issue, with Nastyfacts, Gary Floyd, Limp Wrist, Jos Seein' Red, GB Jones, Younger Lovers, Vaginal Davis, Josh Ploeg, Teu Pai Já Sabe?, Schwarzer Kanal, Bromance, Extra Tongue, and more.

#318/November '09. Destino Final, Ratas Del Vaticano, Hex Dispensers, John Joseph/Cro-Mags, Explode Into Colors, Ratos De Porao, Stupids, Antidotum/Czosnek Tour Diary, Disco Assault, Fuera De Linea

#319/December '09. The Fix, Slices, Nodzzz, Brilliant Colors, Positive Noise, Gun Outfit, Pink Reason, Scrotum Poles, Gandhi's Cookbook, Goner Fest Photospread, Punk On Kuollut, Eläköön Hardcore: A Personal History of Finnish Hardcore

#320/January '10. MRR Top Ten of the Decade, D-Clone, Broken Water, Complications, Control, Ian Glasper (*The Day the Country Died/Burning Britain*)

#321/February '10. Photo Issue. SOLD OUT!!! Sorry...

#322/March '10. MRR Review Staff's 2009 Top Tens, Japanese artist Sugi, Death, Dry-Roy, Druid Perfume, Kim Phuc, Defensa Absoluta

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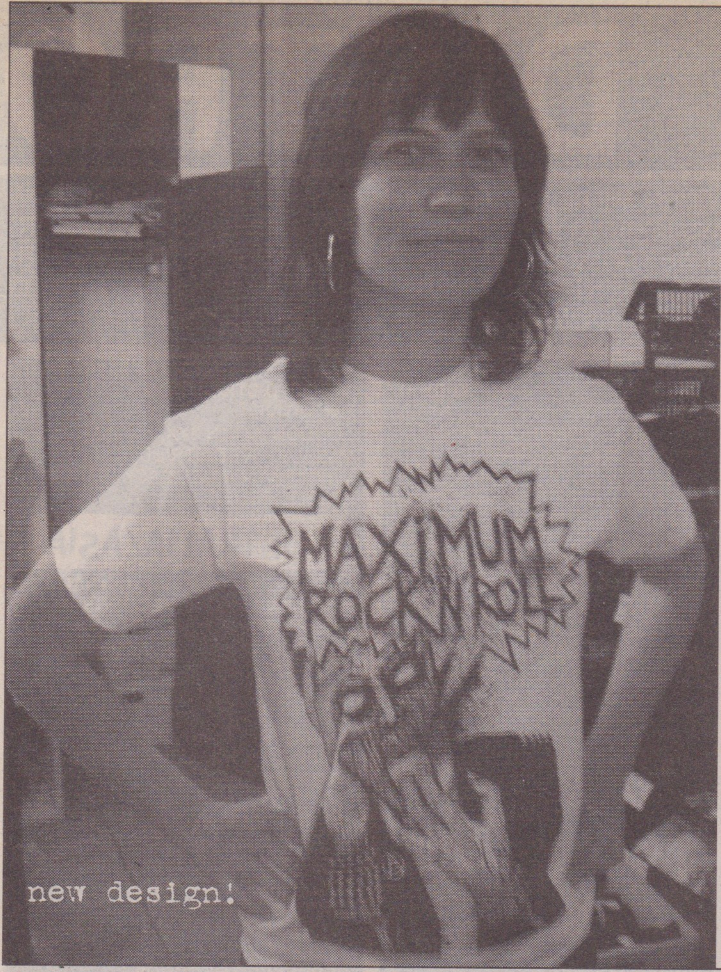

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LETTERS

Send letters to MRR, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146-0760, or to mrr@maximumrocknroll.com. No response guaranteed.

Dear MRR—

I've been an on again, off again, on again reader since 1986. Still love the magazine. I just finished reading the letter section in the March 2010 issue and felt a moral obligation as both a punk and a convict to write this letter.

I am currently serving a five to seven year sentence in Massachusetts state prison for two counts of assault and battery by means of a dangerous weapon. You see, I haven't been a very good person by my current standards or society's. I have been a drug abuser, I've committed act of violence, and I've stolen from people. I almost killed a person over something as trivial as cash. Hell, back in 1989-1990 I put an ad in the classified section of MRR for a Bad Religion "Live in Albany" bootleg cassette and kept countless five dollar bills and spent the summer I was sixteen getting high on other punks dime. I can't change what I've done, but I can work on becoming a better person. With all this said, I am certainly no position to judge anyone. So here's why I am writing:

I would like, at thirty-six, to have punk be as safe as possible for all the kiddies who don't know any better. You see, another inmate from Mass wrote a letter last month asking for pen pals (Issue #322). The address listed is for the Massachusetts Treatment Center. The only inmates held there are the states most devious and sexual offenders. Feel free to check for yourself.

Through all the shit I've been through, the only thing that I could count on was punk. I grew up listening to far too many speeches at Born Against, Fugazi and 411 shows to not take a stand against any type of rape or sex crime. Please check into an inmate before writing them. Many of us are not very good people. Much like my Jewish brother Brace Belden says. Ha Ha.

Keep up the good work.

—Jerry Colvin #W89041
PO Box 146
Norfolk, MA 02056

Jerry—

Thank you for your letter. I confirmed the information that you sent us and I am glad that you felt compelled to write. While we can't predict the motives of any of the inmates writing to MRR in search of pen pals, I agree that any reader considering correspondence should check out where the person is serving their sentence. It seems that in this case, an address gives substantial information in making a decision. With that being said, I would never discourage anyone from writing a fellow punk doing time. People really do make mistakes, but as you said, checking out the origin of your potential pen pal is necessary. In this issue, MRR will be providing an online resource regarding the correctional institution from which the letter originates—not to pass judgment, but to protect the interests of the readers and the inmates. If any one on the inside or the outside has strong feelings regarding this practice, please let us know because we are considering making this a permanent change.

Thanks again.

—Mariam

Commonwealth of Massachusetts/Pondville Correctional Center: www.mass.gov/doc.

Dear MRR,

I mailed in a demo to you last week from Massachusetts! LIMBS BIN!, in an envelope with a single black and white lyrics sheet! I forgot to add the price of the demo—$2-4—and my contact information at this e-mail address (jel08@hampshire.edu) and www.myspace.com/limbsbin! I hope I haven't gotten this in too late. I really enjoyed the photo issue and the decade-capping issue. I was happy to see many of the formative punk records of my introduction to hardcore mentioned, from No Hope for the Kids to Fucked Up's early output. I'm thrilled that in 2010, when I see bands like Brain Killer and Nomos live, I'm excited for the future of hardcore. I'm going to give "best show of the decade" to a particularly ridiculous Inmates/Darvocets show in Albany back in 2007; that was outta control. I look forwards to getting some zines of my own into your mailbox soon, and as a long time reader, I'm always thrilled at how easy it is to get in touch and share and such.

Be well!

—JOSH

Dear MRR,

The photo issue was a good issue. Don't forget Naomi Petersen, who photographed early '80s bands (Black Flag, Meat Puppets, etc,). She is deceased now.

—Ross

Hey Ross—

The only photographers from that era featured in the photo issue were those closely associated with MRR: basically, Murray Bowles who did the MRR photobook, If Life Is A Bowl Of Cherries... *and Helge Schreiber who did* Welcome To Cruise Country. *We tried to focus mostly on current photographers and bands and scenes. BUT, we are planning on running a series of interviews with classic punk photographers throughout the year... Naomi Peterson was a great photographer, and a true inspiration. RIP.*

Dear MRR,

I'm a few issues behind in my comments, but the letters page seems to be pretty empty lately, so I may as well spout off.

I know you guys depend on readers for contributions, but that interview with JJ from the Cro-Mags was a real waste of space. There was no background given at all. JJ was giving his side of controversies that happened 20 years ago with no back story. On top of that, the article could have been half the length if you cut out his useless NY tough guy posturing. Though it was funny how he repeatedly let us know that he could beat up anybody he wanted to if he wasn't a man of peace. Secondly, I'd just like to say FUCK AMEBIX and any other band that retires for 5, 10, or 20 years then comes back to tour on their back catalog, claiming that they earned the right. If you want to earn something get the fuck out of punk. Amebix's last release was the terrible Monolith LP, then they went off to make axes for 20 years. I'd say the Renaissance Fair owes them more than the punk scene. Low door prices just means they're smart enough not to alienate the people who are paying for their tour or buying their next release. Reforming Amebix, Christ on Parade, Accused, etc. is so much easier than doing something new, having to book your own tours or put out your own records. And you get to travel the world for free (or very cheaply at least). It's embarrassing that so many punx buy into the nostalgia game.

Thanks,

—Phil

Hey Phil,

...Thanks for writing, it's true that in the world of message boards and faceless e-sniping, the world of letters is going to the dogs. The interview we did with John Joesph was exactly that, an interview with John Joesph. As with all interviews in this rag, it was an uncensored interview without editorial interjection. I believe that JJ is an important character in the tapestry of punk the same way that Henry Rollins, HR or Ian Mackaye is. In his case, his history will forever be linked to the simmering melting pot that was and is New York Hardcore ... both good and bad. This was not a historical article on the Cro-Mags or NYHC, so any assertions he makes are his own. It would be

awesome to get the other side of the story, any takers???
—Tim Brooks

Dear MRR,

Greetings from North Kern State Prison nestled in the bustling heart of beautiful Delano, California — the jewel of California's central valley! My name is Joshua Livingroom and I am currently serving out a sixteen-month sentence for taking heroin and stealing electronics from Target. Oops. Anyway, my cousin Leslie rules at life and she blessed me with a subscription to your publication. Needless to say, I'm FUCKING STOKED about it. I've been reading MRR since I was 18. Now 32, having Maximum Rocknroll in here is like having my favorite t-shirt or an old pair of converse; comfort food for my mind or something.

I know that I'm hardly the first punk to write you from prison, so by now, you know that prison is a vast cultural wasteland populated by fascists, boneheads and people who listen to Disturbed (on purpose). Needless to say, I am starved for conversation. I saw this dude the other day with a sweet 'crimson ghost' Misfits tattoo on his side. I was going to walk up and get his opinion on "Plan 9" vs. "Walk Among Us," ("Plan 9." Duh.) then I saw the giant Swastika tattooed on his chest and I changed my mind. I briefly considered taking a belt sander to my obligatory Misfits tat, but then I caught sight of his Social D tattoo and somehow felt way better about myself (I wonder if that retard is hip to Mr. Danzigs ethnic background. Fuck it, I ain't tellin' him). Then there was this kid who claimed he was a "gutter." He complained a lot about how the emos were taking over, which was kinda funny, but then he tells me about his hummer and the time he saw Black Flag play a garage in Pamona. Since he was three when Black Flag broke up, he was either confused, a pathological liar or the world most punk rock toddler. I told him about the time I had fish tacos with Jello Biafra and he asked me who Jello Biafra is (I couldn't decide if that made him more cool or less cool. You be the judge…). The moral of the story is this, kids, I NEED PEN PALS! I plan to do a lot of traveling upon my release in July and I'd love to meet anyone with resources and/or tips on places to stay/visit/squat in between Reno, San Francisco and Mexico. You've got a captive audience here and all letters are guaranteed a response. Feel free to vent about your lame-ass roommates / significant others, I'll feign sympathy. Or, if you prefer, I can simply regale you with stories of prison life, or school you on how to get caught shoplifting at Target (it's easier than you think). Oh yeah, I like Jawbreaker, Descendents, Screeching Weasel, No Means No, Against Me!, Crossed Out, Melvins, Leftover Crack, Dillinger Four, Pinhead Gunpowder, Billy Childish, Soda Pop Kids, Tav Falco, etc, etc! Punk / Death / Grind / Powerviolence as well as some sissy la la hipster stuff. So chew me up and spit me out.

Thanks for everything. Keep up the good work, and if you'll allow me to dust off an old Chestnut: Up the Fucking Punks!

—Livernois # G49451
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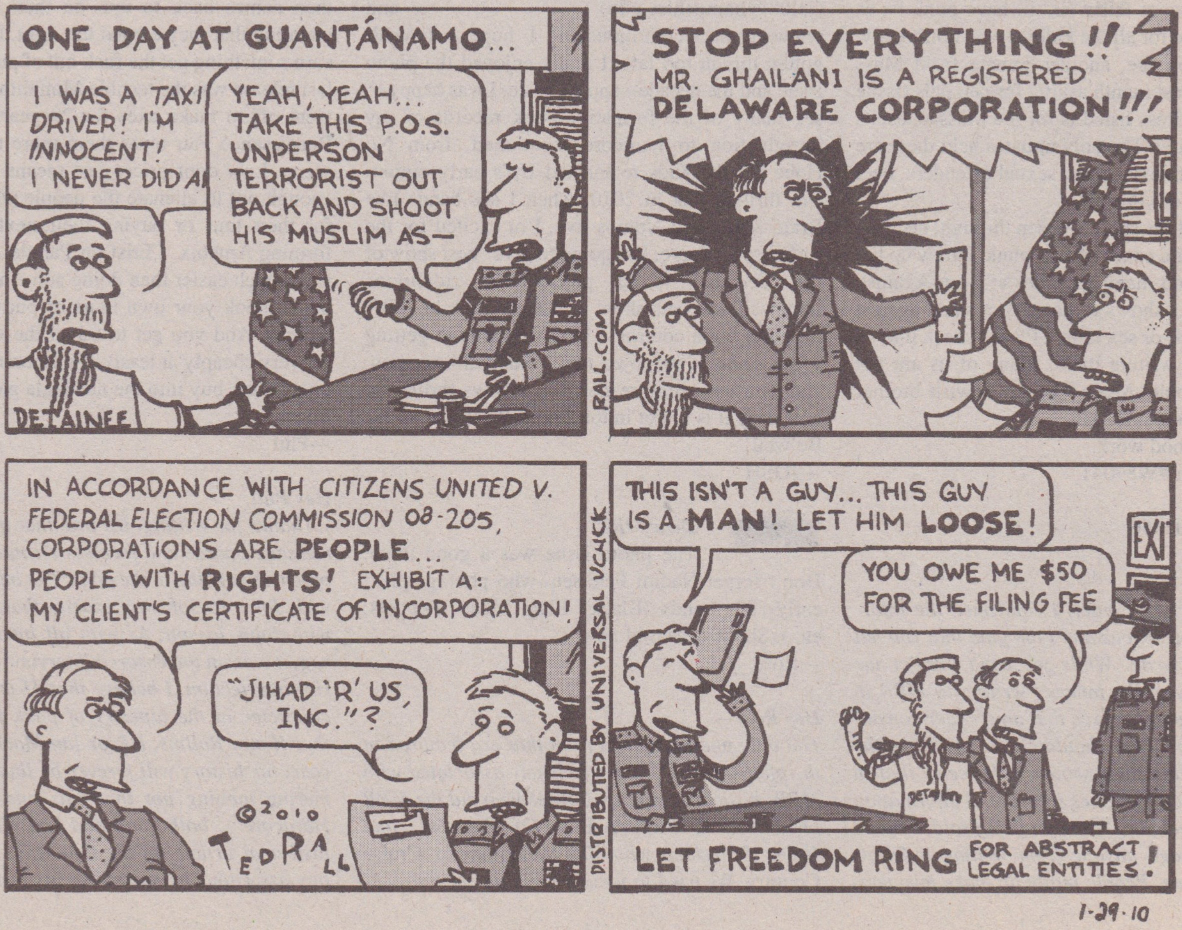
North Kern State Prison: www.cdcs.ca.gov/VISITORS/Facilities/NKSP.html

Dear MRR,

Your movie reviewer sauntered into *Whip It* (the movie), I would have thought punks were more discerning in regards to mass marketing huha and I don't expect people to be perfect. But I then kindly request that you support a move to convince punks, not to support anything forthrightly! Being promoted under Fox Media's name. Their "news," movies and TV programs breed idiot people through their lack of info and flashing lights, ie: voting for Bush twice! Making the world go to war! They use marketing techniques that would make Goebbels blush with endearment and world religion thank you for all their money. The big difference is, if you don't support them along with others then that can be a big market share that other companies cannot and will not financially support and give more breathing space for other media organizations and opinions to exist and be heard, rather than just the right winger status "Rupert" quo. I also personally take it as an affront to the English translation, as it were, of the word journalism. Not only do they support the weapon industry, but their art is crap by buying the rights to classic stories, etc, and twisting the message, no matter how good the trailer is. Might as well start wearing a swastika t-shirt and call the zine: Britney says LOL.

Thanks,
—Blair, NZ



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I am sick of all the little goons that cut their hair and think they're punk. A haircut don't mean shit. Just cause they have records and just wimp around all the time don't mean shit. Every time I see one I kick ass. Nobody should try and be somebody they ain't. Personally I love hardcore, it's the only way to take out your aggressions. Slamdancing is great. Everything else is too slow. New hardcore bands should keep coming out to keep punk alive. And I don't know who the hell all the assholes are that are trying to shut punk out. Authority sucks! I'm sick of it. They only understand their ways. Hardly any new bands are getting half a chance because they can't get places to play cause punks are too rowdy. I am trying to get a band together and it's hard. I just want to play for fun to say what I have to say about my problems and this fucked up society. I just want to make enough money for food, rent and gas. But that's not why I want to play. I want to keep punk alive and to make some kids get out there and thrash in the pit and have some fun. That's why you should give the young punks a chance- so they will carry out the attitude in the years to come.

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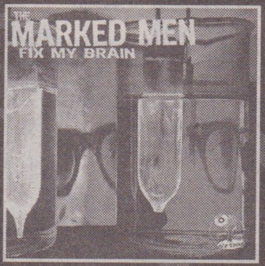

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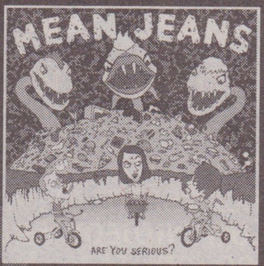

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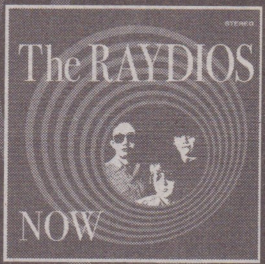

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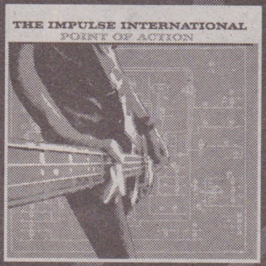

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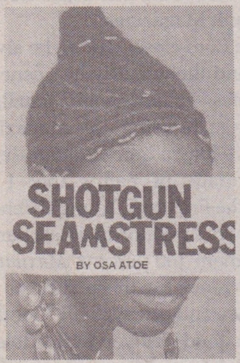


Holidays make me grumpy. All that pressure to be in a good mood on a certain day automatically puts me in a bad mood. At the same time, something in me changed before I moved to New Orleans that made me want to be in a place where people celebrate absolutely everything. People either associate New Orleans with celebration or tragedy. After living in Portland, Oregon for six years, a place you could describe as pleasantly monotonous, I was ready for some highs and lows.

I actually watched the Super Bowl on Sunday, or at least parts of it. Being in a town with an actual personality changes the way you live. I look at the scene I was involved in Portland before I moved. It was pretty ideal, being a queer woman who plays music, because there are so many others, and then after a while, more and more people of color started to move to Portland. So by the time I left, in the fall of 2008, I was leaving behind the scene of my dreams, in a way. But everyone who's ever lived in Portland always compares it to a bubble. My whole life revolved around this group of mainly punk inspired, queer, mostly female musicians who were transplants from other states, and all in their 20s. I was a nanny so it's not like I even knew people from work. My whole world was my housemates, my bandmates, other people in bands, people I saw at shows and then peripherally the folks at the feminist bookstore, or the community organization I volunteered with for a little while.

In New Orleans, there's more of a feeling of being a part of something larger than your particular group of friends. You're a part of a city with a strong historical identity and distinctive culture and you'd have to be the most jaded person in the world to not want to learn more about it and participate on some level, which is why I actually watched some football last Sunday. I just wanted to be around all of the excitement, you know? Of course, it's half ecstatic and half annoying, like the exhilaration of zipping through standstill traffic in the French Quarter with everyone honking their horns to celebrate our victory, but then almost getting smacked in the face by people on foot and in cars who think it's a good idea to try to high five a biker. It's not just events or holidays, it's the actual culture itself that's so appealing. I've been able to see a few marching bands in second line parades that happen randomly throughout the year, and I also went to see a couple punk brass bands who are inspired by the traditional brass bands of New Orleans. I'm actually thinking about putting Chin Up (aka Slow Danger) Brass Band on a No More Fiction show with a touring band cuz they might as well get a taste of what's unique about this place if they're only gonna be in town for one night.

I was just telling Brontez today how queer of a town New Orleans is. It's the secret queer capital of the South. I mean, I guess it's no secret to people who are actually from the South, but you know how a place like San Francisco, for example, has a national reputation for being queer? Well, New Orleans doesn't have that, but it is. If you think about it, where else are all the freaks from Texas, Mississippi and Alabama gonna go? And I'm not talking queer as in mini version of the Castro, although that does exist here. There are also tons of black, poor and working class queers, too, who have created their own culture all to themselves. There's this hip-hop subgenre native to New Orleans called *bounce* and queer bounce rappers created a sub-subgenre called *sissy bounce*, which is starting to gain national attention. And I see black MTF trannies on a regular basis walking around my neighborhood and the Quarter like it's no big deal. Part of me thinks a black transwoman would have a harder time surviving in Portland, Oregon—a seemingly more "liberal" place—than here. Obviously, I wouldn't know for sure.

Honestly, I'm still taking it all in. There are so many layers to this city; it's humbling. I feel like when I talk to people who travel a lot or move a lot, they often try to characterize a city in such a quick and simple way, as if you can really know a place after only being there for a few days, weeks or months. New Orleans is the type of place that defies easy categorization. It's southern, but it's got Caribbean influences; it's progressive and traditional at the same time. It's African, Spanish, French and Native American. It's beautiful and still cheap to live in relative to other major cities. I'm so down with living here. I hate where I grew up. My parents are immigrants so it's not like I have deep roots anywhere in the US, and I knew Portland wasn't gonna be my home forever, but here I am for the first time feeling a lot of pride about where I live. Like meeting someone you have instant chemistry with, I want to give this city more time and get to really know it. I don't have any plans to move on.

Season one wrap-up:

Well this is my twelfth "Basement Screams," so even if they cancel me now I can say, "I did it for a year" which is cool kinda. A year is a good mile marker. I mean, I'm no George. It's cool when people say they actually want to hear about my stupid misadventures sloppily attempting to copy the perfection and craft of Martin Birch, and I never can quite believe it. So thanks for that... Seriously. The fact remains though, until someone else with, ahem, actual credentials steps up, I'm hoping they won't cancel me, because I think this is something you punks out there should be thinking about and experimenting with. Anyone who wants to can learn to do this themselves. If you care about your band, and the way it sounds, it's a great way to have more control over that. Anyone who can afford to play in a punk band (e.g. you're of relative privilege on planet earth) can afford to take up home recording. Even compared to ten years ago, there are an incredible number of inexpensive options on how to do it. You could get the things you need to start with a few weeks pay saved from even a fairly unremarkable job at the mall or the local coffee hut. Home recording isn't a career path anymore than running your own punk record label is or ought to be. But as everyone reading should know the personal touch of doing it yourself is often what makes something special. So... hopefully catch you in "Basement Screams" #13 next month, and until then, here's a few things I learned in the past year.

What I learned in a year of basement screams:

1. Don Zientra's go to chorus pedal is the yellow boxed MXR Stereo Chorus.

Maybe not for you, but for me, this was the answer to a long burning question I'd had. What was that chorus effect you hear on almost every DCHC recording from the '80s? Don was nice enough to do an interview with me in an install-

ment of "Basement Screams" and his memory proved thankfully detailed when it came to this minutia. Usually Zientra used this as a way to thicken the single guitar attack of some of the projects he worked on, in fact maybe the only ones I can think of that don't have that distinct Chorusy shimmer, are the first MINOR THREAT 7", and maybe the SOA "No Policy" EP

2. The Ampeg V4 conquers all.

Listen, I'm just saying if you have the time to keep one of these things in working order, it basically can do no wrong. Bass or guitar, clean or dirty, it always sounds smooth and full, and makes even the most modest of guitars sound like a well-built precision machine. It's weird I'm not one of those "gear-king" guys, but I get asked a lot "what kind of amp should I get?" which is kinda stupid because that's like asking, "what should I eat?" V4's are notoriously difficult to keep in working order. I was on tour for three weeks once with two of them and we came back with both busted. I mean no disrespect to Marshall or Sunn, which serve me in a much more reliable manner, but this is just my favorite amp to record.

3. Don't rely on "fixing it in the mix."

Dumb as it might sound, it really helps to remember this one. I think one of the bigger concerns when I'm recording folks is the "vibe" and the momentum of the session. No one wants to get bogged down on one little detail for two hours and so it becomes kind of easy to brush over something that may not sound right with the intention of cleaning it up later, so as not to take the wind out of everyone's sails. Generally you'll later come to regret this. Generally the less you need to do in the department of EQ, compression, effects—the better. Of course, this stuff is there to improve the sound of a recording, and often times it does, but when you rely on it as a crutch, I guarantee you'll run into trouble. I certainly have. While I was reading through an article on the making of Autopsy's *Mental Funeral* LP this summer, I was struck by their admission that nothing on the record got any additional EQ during the mixing of the record, what you hear is more or less "as-is." While I don't think I'd ever roll quite like that, I think it's something to shoot for. Keep it as pure as you can, get the guitar sound you want when you're playing the guitar, instead of trying to fix the guitar sound you don't want later. Before anyone bums out, just remember Autopsy were punks at heart, and they're even from San Francisco. Perfectly worth another mention in Basement Screams—and it probably won't be the last.

4. Expensive mics don't fix shitty sounding instruments and gear, but decent sounding instruments and gear sounds pretty good with cheap mics.

Seriously plenty of accomplished audio recordists the world over still use a simple Shure SM-57 to capture the sound of an electric guitar. A mic you can buy new for $100, and used for nothing. A great guitar will still sound pretty great with even a middle of the road cheap mic like this, but all the Pro-Tools magic and high end microphones aren't going to fix a weak sounding guitar or a busted ass snare drum. It's amazing how far you can get just changing the drum heads (and tuning them) and guitar strings, making sure your amp is working properly, and it's amazing how much further you can get if the stuff you're doing this on isn't total junk. I'm not saying it needs to be special, just functional, and maybe not falling apart. I realize some bands thrive on the unique sounds their broke-ass shit makes, and I can respect (and often enjoy) that, but for those not working on that alternate paradigm, even the cheap fixes help, and a lot of times they help just as much as the expensive ones. If you're going to spend an entire day of your weekend recording a demo, even if it's just on a four track, spend the $80 on the new drum heads. You'll be happier later.

5. Make a backup copy whenever possible

I miss my computer, but I'm happy to say nothing was lost, other than my faith in Steve Jobs when it died. It sucks, but it could suck a lot more.

BRACE BELDEN is THE LAST PUNK

(It finally happened. They're firing/have fired me. By the time you read this, my box will be cleaned out and the iron-fisted despots that lead the present Junta here at MRR will be cackling in their doghouses, forked tongues flitting out of their evil mouths only to lick the blood off their hooves. The twin stenches of sulfur and hate permeate this former Holy House, that once printed the so-called Punk Bible, now simply producing mimeographed terror and stiff-backed, jack-booted guidelines for record buying and interviews with Hergozevinian posi-crust rock groups. I may be the first up against the wall, but I'll be damned if I'm the last.)

Think of *MRR* as a bird—what once was a spit-drenched wren, now has evolved and taken higher, further flight as the Great Dove we knew it would always become. And yet even with its new shimmering ivory plume, it must shed feathers, for what is re-birth without the death that precedes it?

They asked for my resignation; I could not provide one (Oh! Pride! You mighty, senseless beast!). They requested that I simply stop doing my column, suggesting perhaps I could cite medical issues (mono of the fingers, cancer of the ego) as reason for quit. You know, to avoid controversy. I refused. They wished this cover-up because they feared backlash from certain thuggish (re: wigger) segments of the punk population that hold me in high esteem. In an uncharacteristic act of grace, they agreed to let me write this one last message, this final transmission, this last gasp from my chapped lips before I close them forever. So here we are, if only for a few more fleeting lines, and then there we'll be.

It's April. April. Speak the word, pucker it out of your mouth and push it into the air. My column isn't the only thing to have died a tragic death in this short, lonely month. I speak of course of Christ, of his torture and eventual death at the hands of the Romans and Jews. Like Christ, I am stricken; Like Christ, I shall rise. For him it was three days before he rose from that cave and once again walked the Earth, spreading Joy and Love and Goodness. I, too, shall rise again, ready to kiss the heads of tiny children and drink freely the milk that shalt flow from the bosom of Punk Magazines.

When the Lord closes a door, he always opens a window, and the window he opened for me is in Los Angeles, California, in a small, unassuming building housing a magazine called *Razorcake*. I've long admired *Razorcake*; from their tireless coverage of bands that I love, like Dillinger 4, the Ergs, and Young Offenders, to the alliteration of their editor-in-chiefs name, I am on board with them 100 percent. *Maximum* may no longer have room for those such as I; so be it. *Razorcake* does and always will. Goodbye, *MRR*. Goodbye for good. See you in the dole queue, au revoire, tanx,

Chicks can't rock.

Well, most of them, anyway.

But you tell that to anything that's got a vagina, and is human; it will most likely call you "sexist." Or beat you up, as has been my experience.

But no matter. The truth is the truth. Women do not belong in rock.

It's very nice to think that they do, as well as politically correct. And it can sure get you "sensitive guy" points if you say that some girl you saw play was really good. But, alas, it's bullshit.

Chicks in bands belong in rock 'n' roll about as much as salt belongs on an open wound.

Women should stay on the side-lines taking pictures, or better yet, giving blow-jobs. Isn't that what it's all about, anyway?

Okay.

So maybe *some* girls can rock. But the odds of one doing so are about the same as getting hit by a bus. Maybe one in 10,000.

For the most part, women do not belong behind guitars, or, god-forbid, a drum set. And while there are many reasons why this is true, the main one is they simply do not possess a penis.

And you must have a penis to rock.

Rock hard.

Let's start from the beginning.

Of human life, that is.

We are all born with either a penis or vagina. Or, in some rare cases, both.

But for reasons of this argument, let's just stick with the nuts and bolts, and not those metallic twisty puzzles my friend Allyson likes to play with so much.

Once we are born, our parents begin to raise us according to our sex. Boys learn to play with guns while girls learn to play with dolls.

Unless, of course, the child is unlucky enough to be born in Northern California, where he *and* she both get the dolls.

Anyway, while this may seem like an over simplification, it is, for the most part, true. Males around the world play more violently with one another from early on, while females, on the other hand, learn to get along, having tea parties, and playing dress-up.

The reasons for this are mostly genetic. It is inherent in the male of the human species to be wild and savage, while females have always been more civilized.

Which explains why women should be the political heads of the world, and not men. But that's another story.

Anyhow, civility and rock do not mix well. Just look at the English. They act proper, have tea and biscuits, dress in nice suits, but play dress up with girlie underwear in secret. No wonder The Beatles and Rolling Stones moved here. Who wants to live in a pussy country, especially one that has major dental problems.

On the other hand, Australia, which is mostly outback, has crocodiles, guys with spears and lips pierced with *plates*, and five foot high rodents hopping around. This makes for some real kick-ass rock n' roll. Like AC/DC and the Hard-Ons, *because* of it's lack of civilization. It seems the more wild the country, and in this case, the continent, the more rock can grow and prosper.

But I'm getting way ahead of myself.

Let's go back to the penis.

All men are born with one. And all men learn to play with it at a very early age. By the time we are one or two years old, we have learned that holding it is more comforting than anything our parents could ever do for us.

By the time we are five or six, we've learned that playing with it can makes it hard, and by fourteen or fifteen, that it can perform some pretty cool tricks. Well, in my case, I was seventeen, but it would have been earlier if my dad had only explained to me that when you "rub yourself", you do it up and down, and not side to side as I believed.

Playing with your penis is very important, and even more so for future rockers. See, the man gets used to having a hard stiff thing in his hands from an early age. The harder, and stiffer, the better. He also learns how to grip this tool, and, eventually, how to use it to pleasure himself, as well as perhaps other members of his boy-scout troop.

Eventually, when the male finally does pick up a guitar, it's pretty damn familiar. Sure there are strings on the damn thing, but the principle is the same. Slide your palm and fingers up and down really quickly, and you feel good.

On the other hand, what do females do? They learn that if they make dainty little circles with their pointer or middle finger, they feel good. There's a big difference between tiny little circles and big long strokes.

This, of course, brings us to the small penis principle. Simply stated, the smaller the prick, the weaker the lick. Which, makes sense. If a guy is used to wanking on his tiny little pecker, of course he's not going to be able to adjust to a BIG, hard guitar neck. Duh.

But getting back to females, they don't know how to wank at all. They don't know long and spastic wrist and arm movements. Instead, they know sweet little tickles that make them feel "oh-so-good". No wonder they are so good at sewing, and other fine crafts.

Then there's the whole orgasm thing. Men, unlike women, really know how to blow their load.

Let's take an AC/DC song for example. Like "Let There Be Rock" or "Whole Lotta Rosie". Angus, the guitarist, certainly knows his rhythm. The songs have a steady beat you can wank to, and they both build up with crazy guitar leads to one hell of a climax.

One.

Not two.

Not three.

And not zero.

One.

Women, for the most part, don't understand this. They are used to the whole multiple orgasm thing, or none at all, therefore their songs are all over the place and are usually unintelligible. They don't know that blowing one big one is much better than having lots of mini-ones.

And yes, I've heard all about that tantric crap where men can have many orgasms, or ones that last for minutes, even hours. You know what I say? Who cares. Do I want more sex after I blow my big one? Fuck no. I want a beer and drugs. As does any self-respecting guitarist who just finished a great song.

Another reason chicks can't rock is because of their hands. They are naturally smaller than most men's, and have difficulty reaching around the entire neck. That's why, girls usually play 3/4 scale guitars, and have to use *both* hands when giving a blow-job.

But what's probably most telling about females, and rock, is their sound. When a woman is in a band with other men, she is most likely going to sound better than a woman who is in a band with all other women.

Why is this? Let's examine it.

We'll start with the all chick bands, which, 99.5% of the time, suck. The reason for this is that besides not being able to handle the stiff neck of a guitar, women make horrible choices in amps, and the sounds they choose to get from them. Most women go for Fender Amps, or some other brand that's *not* Marshall. Why? The fuck if I know. Maybe an amp that's too big and black scares them? I dunno. But what I do know is that most of the time their guitars sound weak, jangly, hollow, and too high pitched, like their voices. They also wouldn't know how to use a distortion box if it was a tampon. And their choices in guitars, oy....

Men, real ones that is, on the other hand, know that big and black is the way to go, and a heavy guitar like a Les Paul or Explorer, or even a Peavey, rocks. And distortion is king. But just the right amount. Enough so that your balls shake, rattle and roll, but not so much to make all the guitar notes begin to sound the same. Much like a female rattling on and on about how her day was.

Drums. Chicks can't rock on those either. For the most part, the reasons are the same as the guitar. They don't know how to grip the sticks, beat them hard, keep a wanking rhythm, or how to get a good sound. Plus, their breasts get in the way.

But another reason chicks can't drum is because they have too many brain cells. Drummers, for the most part, are morons. And that's what makes them so great. The dumber they are, the harder they hit those skins. The more a drummer drools and smells like an animal, the more likely he is to be a savage behind that kit. Women just aren't like that. They smell nice, hardly drool, and still know how to think. Now, are drummers dumb because their brains get rattled around from all that banging? Or are they born that way? Or is it both? Someone should do a study. But there is one thing that is certain, smart drummers suck.

Vocals. There is not much to discuss here because, alas, this is an area where a large number of chicks can rock. Maybe even five percent. You don't need a penis to have a good voice and be able to scream, you just need the right amount of drugs, booze, and anger.

And that anger is very important. Rock'n'roll is all about rage, baby. Sure it can make you feel all warm and fuzzy, like my friend M. Doughty in Soul Coughing likes to think. Then again, he plays through a Fender.

But it's the rage that makes rock *rock*. That feeling of wanting to break everything insight, then fuck the hell out of whoever you are with. But not before doing all those drugs and drinking all that booze. And women simply do not have this rage. Probably because it is testosterone driven, and they, well, do not have balls.

All this said, there are some exceptions to the rules. Usually, women who are dykes, can rock. They may not have a penis, but they sure wish they had one. And that, makes them grip that guitar all the more harder, and makes their fingers play with agility and speed and an actual sort of envy.

Then there are the "loose" girls. The ones who love to fuck. They too can, for the most part, rock. It may be due to the fact that they know how to let loose, but I bet it's got something to do with their expert ability through experience to handle a penis. But, alas, they are few and far between.

And then there are the others. That rare diamond in the rough. The needle in the haystack.

These women rock for reasons unknown to both myself and mankind. They are true natural wonders, and should be cherished and admired, and put upon a pedestal. For these women truly are gifted. Born without the proper tools, these ladies have learned to overcome their handicap, and play with the best of them.

And for those rare women who can and do

rock, I salute you.

Take My Life, Please.

Endnotes:

Happy April, everyone!

The big news around these parts is that for the first time *ever*, fucking X (the *Australian* X) is coming to the USA!!! This May, Steve Lucas and kids are coming to do a West Coast tour with the A FRAMES. From Seattle to Austin for Chaos In Tejas, and back to the West Coast. Big thanks to Timmy Hefner for making it happen. It's a dream come true. Corny, but true. Another band I never thought I'd get to see…go see 'em if you can, and say hi, as I'll be out on the road with them.

Also getting me excited are the two new singles from Detroit's DRUID PERFUME. By now they should be able shed the ex-PIRANHAS label, but hey, if it helps lure in the uninitiated, I'll keep using it. One single (*Other Worlds*) is on M'Lady Records, the other (*Don't Eat 'Em There Poison*) on X! Can't get enough of these weird punk monsters. Word is they have a new album in the can.

In the reissue department, 1977 Records out of Japan is set to unleash a new batch of repo singles, all must-haves, all will save you oodles from not having to get the originals…at long last the TITS ("Daddy Is My Pusher / We're So Glad Elvis is Dead"), and from the Netherlands, FILTH's elusive single both get the treatment! I see on the 1977 site that they've also got legit reissues of both VICTIMS (Australia) in the works, as well as a CRACKED ACTOR CD (they reissued the *Nazi School* 7" a few months ago). And last, but not least, the FANS *You Used to Be* and LAST STAND's *Just a Number* join the ranks of the reissued. TORA! TORA! TORA!

By the time you read this, the other rare singles label, Sing Sing Records will also have three new ones ready for your hungry ears: SPIDER (UK), ROLLER BALL's "Savage Eyes," and the DEAF AIDS. Roller Balls feature two members of ELTON MOTELLO, prior to joining that band. All three hard-to-find and great singles. And, I gotta say, all three pick up the pace after the slight let down of the previous batch (JEFF HILL BAND, etc). Check the Sing Sing blog for updates on their releases and other cool early power pop discoveries: singsingrecords.blogspot.com.

Rave Up has a new batch as well. Philadelphia's WARM JETS, the CARDIAC KIDZ, the ACTION (by way of Canada, you know, the "TV's On the Blink" band), SF Art Punks the SPECTACLES (recorded in 1980, never before released) and most recently, the DIODES (a live recording from 1978). Like pretty much every Rave Up release, the copies of these I've heard are 1/3 – 1/2 good, and the rest is mostly filler of demos, live material, alt takes and otherwise unreleased miscellany of varying quality.

Man, that SCREAMERS Pat Garrett Demos bootleg sure kicked up a lil' duststorm on the internet. A steep price ($30) for a one-sided 12". The packaging is gorgeous (silkscreened, clear vinyl and silkscreened cover), the sound quality pretty much tops all other versions of these legendary recordings. It was rumored to be a legit release; band members deny any knowledge of it. Limited to 300. If you didn't already grab one, check eBay and be prepared to dig deep into your wallet.

If I was more in tune with the times (or bothered keeping tabs on all the messageboards, blogs and other internet chatter) I would have long ago known about Avi Spivak's *killlller* zine, *Humanbeing Lawnmower*. I stumbled across a mention of the zine on Crushed Butler's MySpace page…and finally picked up a copy at Needles and Pens here in SF.

Seriously, if you are reading this column, you owe it to yourself to pick up a copy of *HBL*. Not only is it chock-a-block with important articles ("Thug Rock Top 50") and interviews that read like a who's who of the bands who spend the most time on my turntable: FLAMIN GROOVIES, JESSE HECTOR (CRUSHED BUTLER, HAMMERSMITH GORILLAS, all around top dude), the DICTATORS, EDDIE AND THE HOT RODS, MC5...all that, plus the thing looks fucking cool. It's an all around top-notch zine. I can't tell you how long it's been since I've read a zine, got schooled on shit I had never heard (but was right up my alley), taken notes on what I need to hear. Just like the old days! The writing is pretty simple, but has enough enthusiasm to make it fun to read. And Avi's illustrations are great too. Well worth the $6 it'll set you back. Email Avi to get a copy: thehumanbeinglawnmower@gmail. Hopefully he has a new one in the works.

As you may or may not know (or care), I spent some formative years in Bloomington, Indiana and still have a soft spot for the place. A month or so ago I got to hear Bloomington's HORRIBLY WRONG's swansong LP. Those in the know might be asking yourself, "Huh? I thought those guys broke up years ago?" Well, they did. But, lucky for you and I, Shit In Can and Eradicator Records are stupid enough to release an album by a long broken up band that – let's be honest – didn't get much attention outside of Monroe County. I gotta say, it's a great fucking record. No bullshit, no gimmicks, just pure gut-rot garage punk as only semi-isolated young guns from the Midwest can make happen. Well worth tracking down. 100 on red vinyl, 400 on black, all with silkscreened covers.

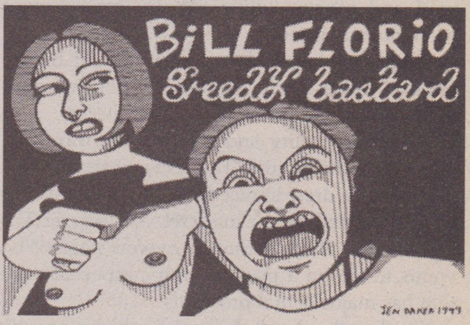
Living very much in the present, but still so much in the past, APACHE DROPOUT just dropped their debut 7". If you've happened to see them, you know to expect a blitzed out mind-jam of fuzzy, swirling psych. Sorta WOODEN SHIJPS-ish…same realm of music anyway. (www.myspace.com/apachedropout) It translates well to vinyl, but seeing a band like this is always best.

The rumors are true! WILD THING have two new records in the works. Are you ready???

Aussie boy toys EDDY CURRENT SUPPRESSION RING have a new album out, *Rush to Relax*. Sure you've heard by now. Goner's doing the deal again this time around. You probably didn't hear that Mexican Summer did a now-you-see-it-now-you-don't single called "Wet Cement" with Eddy Current. I didn't even know it existed until Mitch Cardwell sent a frantic email looking for a copy. If you have an extra, I know a few people who are looking. Or maybe it's not even out yet. The record collectors are sweating!

Speaking of Eddy Current, they'll be in the States this summer!

That's it this time around. It's been a brutal year so far. Send all hits, tips and shits to me at: 4209 Shafter Ave/Oakland, CA 94609/markmurrmann@gmail.com



Music is something that separates man from the animals and the difference between music and say, making noises to communicate with one another, is that music is an almost purely emotional medium. Some folks believe that man used music before verbal speech, like the how tribes in Africa communicated with drums for eons. It's interesting, because where the hell did it come from? No animals actually make music like we do, and no animals dance. And lots of animals eat their own poop and their children. What's the connection here? Is music what makes our society work and we've never even noticed it? What would human life be without it and would human life even be possible with out it?

Of course we experience music on different levels, I know that "I Wanna Be Your Boyfriend" is E A B a few times then C# A when it gets to "Do you love me babe." I actually didn't know any of that, I didn't even know the line was "Do you love me babe." I never bothered to try and decipher it exactly, but I could play that song without practicing it and probably without messing it up too badly. The thing is, there is that emotional part of my brain that has the ability to play the song without thinking about it, or to sing the song without needing to remember the next line, and then there is my logical part that sometimes gets in the way and says, "Hey isn't that part coming up soon? Have you counted to sixteen yet or are we at twelve?" Anyway, if you let the math part of your brain get in the way, you fuck the song up, or at least play it badly. It seems with enough practice one can jump that gap between singing the song along with the karaoke machine and just singing the song without having to think about it.

So, that makes me wonder, are people who get

stuck not being able to play on an emotional level more prone to not letting emotions get in the way of everything else? Are people who are good at tuning into their music and singing or playing guitar or drums without needing to know what part comes next more prone to letting emotions mess with their logic, if someone dumps them do they quit their job and become homeless? I don't know the answer to these questions. I do know that you can be a complete imbecile and write a great song. *MRR* would be a place where lyrics are torn apart for being racist or sexist or ridiculously violent, but in truth, those are emotional sorts of things. Just because a song is, say, racist, I think if it's expressing raw emotion it has potential to be a better song than someone who comes up with some sort of chant at a protest to, say, stop varnishing children's furniture. Then again, I walk around singing commercial jingles from when I was five, and I have no emotional attachment to say Dynamo or Juicy Fruit gum. So there are two sides here. The side of the white power song that's catchy, because you really hate your Russian Jewish landlord and emotionally connect with hateful lyrics, and then there is the emotional power of music which forces me to sing about the New York lottery in the shower and then get the urge to drop $5 on it when I leave the house. People go to church because their parents force them to, but there's a whole lot of singing going on in church now isn't there?

So, we're all playing with and being played with here on some level. Music is a very powerful force and you really can't fight it or embrace it with any logic. There is no formula for a good song versus a horrible song. There are a million songs with the same chord progressions, the same beat, the same sort of singing, and some of them we all love and some of them no one loves, and then music we really got into ten years ago seems really lame to us now. I don't have these same sorts of feelings for books or movies or even food. Sure, I'll get into something for a little while with a little more intensity from time to time, like when I decided to watch every Kurosawa film in a row over the course of three weeks, but I'd watch them again and not like or dislike them anymore other than I'll probably remember how a few of them end. Music, I'll listen to over and over again. It's not like when I ate Pop Tarts twice a day for a month. I'm not going to feel sick when that second Ergs record comes on my headphones, because I've listened to it too much. I'm actually going to associate all the experiences I connect with the Ergs when I listen to their record. Then again, if they say, ran over my foot with their cargo van, I may have trouble listening to them again.

That's another thing, you see a great band live and sometimes listen to really bad recordings of them. Well, it seems a lot of music has to do with using your imagination anyway, sure you may not be able to hear the bass fills because the live recording you have has the guys drunk brother filling in and he didn't play the fills, but a lot of times you think you can hear them even when they're not there. It's like the music is playing in your head anyway and the record is just singing along with you. That's somewhat magical and freaking probably more powerful than anything any of us can create and we succumb to this power on a daily basis.

Now imagine if we could make music a weapon. I'm not talking about cheesy nincompoops who would say, "Let's use music as a weapon! A weapon against oppression. NYU medical center kills monkeys and you know it!" I'm thinking about someone figuring out how music works and what affects the greatest percentage of the population. Someone came up with something so invasive that it gets stuck in your head immediately. Fuck, maybe Barry Manilow already achieved this? Imagine if some song was like that Juicy Fruit commercial and got stuck in your head every time you had a quiet moment or took a shower. Now imagine that not only did it get stuck in your head, but it bummed the fuck out of you at the same time. Suicide rates soar, suicides create more suicides by the sheer psychological nature of trends, markets collapse, people commit more suicide because of fear of the unknown. All we have left are folks with autism. Felix Havoc runs for president and wins.

Eh, I'm sure whatever the counter attack would be will be the best song ever.

bill@candids.com

TIME THAT I GOT PAID

"ìWe been tryin' harder everyday/And I think it's time that we got paid"î-ZERO BOYS, "ìTryin' Harder"î

That song's from the ZERO BOYS' *Vicious Circle* album. It's not really the strongest song on that album, but I still think that any hardcore record collection missing a copy is incomplete. I remember having a discussion with someone about that song at a show sometime in the '80s. He was actually offended with the sentiment—*"ì'Time that we got paid?' Come on!"î* the guy said. In his eyes, he viewed their aspirations to get paid for their work equaling selling out. At the time, it made me wonder if there was a grain of truth in that statement. Still, when I saw the ZERO BOYS last summer at the No Way Fest after nearly three decades of fandom, I didn't bring it up when making chit-chat with them. Instead, I told them of my regrets that I missed a Boston show they played at the end of '80 or early '81, over a year before *Vicious Circle*'s release. They didn't seem all that interested in what I had to say but I'll leave that alone.

Still, that line popped into my head a few months ago. You'll have to read the whole column to find out why, though. I've been doing this writing thing for a long time. I've actually been writing since I was a kid, doing small newsletters about items both real and imaginary. I did a few record reviews for my high school paper, writing about TED NUGENT's *Free For All* album and the DEAD BOYS' *Young Loud and Snotty*. In fact, the latter found its way into a publication of writings for one of my English classes. There's a little story behind that—there's *always* a story with me, ain't there? Our teacher, Mrs. Wilma Lunder (and, no, I never once bellowed Fred Flintstone's infamous WILMAAAAAAA!) once had the idea for us to bring records that we liked to class. My selection was *Young Loud and Snotty*. The needle hits the disc, the opening chords of "ìSonic Reducer"î fill the room and there are immediately horrified looks on many of the kids' faces. This was the fall of '77, mere weeks after my Punk Rock Epiphany, the moment where I heard the SEX PISTOLS' "ìGod Save The Queen"î for the first time.

Anyway, one of the projects in Mrs. Lunder's class that fall was a newspaper called *Wasted Times*, a collection of jokes, puzzles, fake news and classified ads and more silliness from the minds of us eleventh graders. And, yes, I saved it. My contributions were a report on a New England Patriots loss, 24-14, to the Buffalo Bills and that aforementioned review. There was another review of the same record that took a contrary opinion, courtesy of Georgine Baker. She opined, *"ìThe music is different to say the least. It gave me a terrible headache and made me hate music for a little while... I can't understand how they can call themselves musicians. Just because you hit drums, pluck at instrumental strings and scream, it doesn't make you a musician."î* Georgine concludes the review by stating, *"ìin my opinion, the group Dead Boys should be dead!"î* Man, that's *harsh*! And I hope Georgine's words didn't place a hex on them because, as well know, poor Stiv Bators died after being hit by a car in 1990. Georgine lives in Florida now and we've exchanged a few emails. I brought up the review but I don't think she remembered much about it. And I didn't mention the possibility of any curse.

I suspended my budding writing career until after graduating from college in 1982 and the story of *Suburban Punk / Suburban Voice* has been told and re-told so there's no need to do that here. What people might not know is, besides doing my zine and contributing to *MRR* practically since the beginning, I've done some other music writing as well, for more commercial-type enterprises. While I was working in record stores, we'd get these industry magazines like *Billboard, HITS, CMJ* and the like. Some of these rags and various marketing companies would call to get sales lists, see how their releases were doing, etc. I occasionally contributed a short report to *HITS*, about my indy picks.

Speaking of those marketing companies, many of them weren't above asking me to fudge the sales figures a bit, to make their particular releases look like stronger sellers than they were. Some would offer various swag to influence those reports and, sometimes, I'd work it to my advantage. There was some kind of sales contest from BMG to see which local independent store sold the most of a certain release and the winner would receive a five-CD changer. I fudged it

well enough that I won—but I wanted to kind of keep it quiet, since I had no intention of giving that disc player to the store. So when the local rep showed up, I went out to the parking lot with him to switch the player from his car to mine, all the time looking over my shoulder. Incidentally, this player was a piece of crap and broke down within two years. Most of those multi-CD changers are crap and I've only used single bay players since. I suppose I got what I paid for! But it was a dirty business and I didn't think twice about working it to my advantage, on occasion.

I eventually managed to combine my writing and retail work into some cash. A rather odd gentleman by the name of Wayne Green started publishing a monthly (and then bi-weekly) newspaper, *Music Retailing*. The managing editor, Mark Lo, was a music scene acquaintance of mine and he got me a column that I dubbed *Spirit of Independents* (clever, eh?). Since this was 1991-92, I wrote quite a bit about bands on Sub Pop, Amphetamine Reptile, etc. I lauded such bands as BIG CHIEF, TAR, LOVE BATTERY, SKIN YARD, MONSTER MAGNET and FUDGE TUNNEL. I cringe when reading my words about some of the bands I praised back then, but I can still rock most of *Jackson* by TAR and the hypnotic song "ìBetween The Eyes"î by LOVE BATTERY. I got paid $50 an article. The paper didn't last very long, but *Suburban Voice* was my main outlet, anyway, and I was actually making a few bucks putting it out. 'Tis true!

Which brings us up to the present. I did do columns for *Hit List* (started by former *MRR* mainstay Jeff Bale) and *AMP*, which his co-founder Brett Mathews started after the former folded. I didn't have much choice in the matter since he put my name on the masthead before asking me if I'd like to write for them. I figured that if he went to all that trouble... so I dutifully submitted a column for a number of years, as well as one for their *Loud Fast Rules* offshoot. *AMP* was always the kind of magazine that "ìplayed the game"î with the labels and, man, some of the bands that were getting prominent ink were wretched beyond belief. I wondered if I wanted to be associated with a magazine that had the likes of HAWTHORNE HEIGHTS, FALL OUT BOY, PARAMORE and THURSDAY on the cover. Over the past few years, it's become more of a lifestyle magazine, with plenty of ads and articles about clothing companies, tattoo artists and the like. They even started taking ads from Wal-Mart.

That was the breaking point for me. One of the Wal-Mart ads was for a "ìSummerTour Survival Guide"î that includes a fourteen-song CD plus a publication that includes interviews and "ìposters, prizes, games and much more!"î. all for a mere $3.88 and Wal-Mart was the only place you could get it. My column for the Fall '08 issue was about that kind of marketing from Wal-Mart. I'm not sure if it was an oversight or intentional phasing out but I didn't get notices about column deadlines after that. I wasn't told I was fired and I never officially quit, but just decided to concentrate on this column and never did follow up with what happened there. I should say that I'm very fond of Brett and not *all* the bands they cover suck but I was starting to feel dirty being associated with that kind of magazine.

Or so I thought... because things are changing in my life. I just turned 50 and have been taking stock, a bit. I just had a long conversation with my sister Sue, complaining about our new health insurance, which we get through Ellen's work—how expensive it is for the premiums, co-pays and the like, plus there's a deductible. Sue is a para-professional, working with autistic children in the Peabody school system (the city where we both live) and her work pays for most of her insurance. She suggested I might want to look into teaching, that I could make decent money and benefits and wouldn't have our insurance eat up so much of Ellen's paycheck. This came out of the blue and I plan on pondering it a bit. I really can't picture myself doing it, to be honest. But it might not be necessary—there might be a way for me to make money by doing something I love.

There's an old friend of mine who works for a publicity company in NYC. One of his co-workers recently became an associate editor for *Billboard*, which, if you're not familiar with it, is essentially the bible of the music and entertainment business. I was telling him about our ever-growing expenses and how we could use more money and he suggested I contact this lady. Apparently, they're looking for new writers, different ideas, preferably from people with ties to the "ìunderground,"î whatever that means these days. So I contacted her and told her about my nearly 30 years of writing experience and what I could bring to *Billboard*. I mentioned that, given the "ìresurgence"î of vinyl in the past few years, perhaps she'd like someone to review stuff a bit more off the "ìbeaten path."î And since I still love classic rock and metal, she wondered if I'd be interested in covering that "ìbeat"î as well. She made me an offer to do this writing and, to be blunt, it pays damned well. One of the perks would include occasional travel to large-scale concert events, on their dime.

I haven't given her an answer yet. It's a lot to chew on. There was a time when I did want a job in the music biz but eventually decided it wasn't for me. Sometime in the '90s, I realized it was DIY punk and hardcore that meant the most to me. I didn't want to go to as many large concerts or even club gigs anymore. I ventured into more basements than in my younger years. It was DIY or die! But this is a pretty sweet opportunity to do something I'm good at and get paid well. And I'll have the chance to provide wider publicity to bands that could otherwise fly under the radar. If FUCKED UP and PISSED JEANS are starting to get some mainstream coverage, why not great bands like DESTINO FINAL and AMERICAN CHEESEBURGER or Boston bands such as LIBYANS, BRAIN KILLER and WASTE MANAGEMENT?

It's attempting to balance ethics with making a living, with paying the bills. I wonder if I'd be leading a double life by continuing to contribute to this 'zine while also doing work for a publication that pretty much epitomizes the corporate machinations of the musical/industrial complex. I have a feeling if I take the job with *Billboard*, there's a pretty good chance you won't be seeing my work in this space anymore. So if there's no column by yours truly in the next issue, you'll know why. Maybe you'll want to keep up with my work in *Billboard*. It's quite expensive, though—it's $299 per year or about $6 per issue. Quite a few public libraries do carry it, though, so if you need your Quint fix and don't want to shell out that kind of money, there's another option.

In the meantime, I'm keeping my PO box open and will probably keep doing the *Suburban Voice* blog, as well as my radio show, so keep those packages coming.

See you next month?

Al Quint, PO Box 43, Peabody, MA 01960, suburbanvoice@earthlink.net

MINDLESS CONTENTMENT WITH CHUCK BARRELS

Much like you, I was also sort of surprised Andre Dawson got selected for enshrinement in the Baseball Hall of Fame. Surprised in a good way though, as he's one of those borderline players who I figured would eternally get the shaft much like Dave Parker has. But the selection committee grabbed their balls and gave The Hawk the nod. I remember witnessing Dawson throw some slug out at first base on a one-hop line drive to right field as a kid. It blew my adolescent mind. *He threw a guy out at first from the outfield!* I didn't even think was possible at the time. I'm still not so sure it is. The guy had a fucking cannon, that's for sure. So, congrats to you Andre Dawson! Tim Raines, who?

So, I know you want me to discuss the fact that Turk Wendell was totally left off the ballot, and how that fruit Todd Zeile got the nod (with 0.0% of the vote, thank you very much), but I need to talk about some music here. Look for that rant and an extended overview of Fred McGriff's career in the next issue of *Baseball Digest*. In the meantime, we need to discuss this new FEELING OF LOVE long player, cryptically titled *Ok Judge Revival*. No idea what that means, but Guillaume is operating on another level than the rest of us anyway. FoL released a shit-ton of wax back in 2008, which they backed up with a US tour, and then they took a break for a spell. Which was a good move, because by the time their first LP was released, I was sort of burnt out on them. But the G-Man is back with a back with a vengeance in Tha Dime, with a 12", a couple singles, and this here LP, which I'm going to call the best thing they've ever done. They use the garage-rock template as their launching pad, but power their assault with hefty doses of PUSSY GALORE and other vintage "pigfuck" sounds and Jonny-boy Spencer outfits and relations. This is not Frenchmen emulating the sounds of America,

which is sadly what many European rock bands have left us to expect. This is some weirdo Frenchies taking our schtick and making it into something altogether new. Weird-punque par excellence, imbued with the sort of perversity and sticky creepiness that only a French mind could create. If you've heard any of their records from the prior recordings, this "new" direction is somewhat less savage, less garage-reverent and far more layered and visionary. They riff on the VU quite a bit here, especially on "God Willing," which might be the song of the year (or at least the winter), if you believe what my dope-smoking cohort The Gaffer has to say. It's real sweaty. Best French band on the planet says me, right now. I really think Guillaume might be turning into some sort of Gallic Ben Wallers. Fantastique! (www.killshaman.com)

If you know me, and I know you don't, you know I hate to flog the records of artists from my locale, the wilds of Western New York, but there are a couple hot new slabs from the WNYHC scene I feel the need to fondle in print just a little bit here. Firstly, there's the new PLATES 7", provocatively titled *The Boner Beach EP*, and it's a real punch in the sternum. Perhaps the ultimate Buffalo band, managing to sum up all of the post-industrial wasteland vibes we feel here every day, surrounded by long-closed steel plants and empty grain mills, unfulfilled promises and gray winters. The band is currently on hiatus while everyman lead singer T. Laser is in Korea studying martial arts, but come fall they're going to be back with a bong and this EP is just part of the build-up to that triumphant return. They somehow combine the feel-bad sliminess of FANG with the Midwestern-core of CRUCIFUCKS and could (and will) run in the same pack that outfits like PISSED JEANS, DRUNKDRIVER and other nasty bands have formed. This one is a four-song 45-rpm banger, total wall-of-destruction recording quality, and limited to a scant 300 copies. Get one now or pay horror prices on eBay once these behemoths take the country by storm in late 2010. (www.bigneckrecords.com)

The second Buffalo crew I'm going to plug here are the mighty BROWN SUGAR, a band who are a bit younger and skinnier than the he-men of PLATES (although they do share a bass player), but who are no less savage. Their debut 7" went out of print with a quickness, garnering them *kvlt* status in exotic locales like Sydney, Adelaide and Cleveland, but leaving much of middle America without a chance to grip a copy. Well, they've corrected that wrong with their debut LP, simple called *An Encounter*, which should be readily available to blow minds across the States and the rest of the free world. A steaming cup of irreverent rust belt hardcore, filled to the rim with sugary(!) hot lixx and creamy riffs, this thing is going to make the right people pay attention, bringing classic hardcore shitstormers like YDI, REAGAN YOUTH and MECHT MENSCH to mind, but with a shit-headedly modern sense of humorous desperation. They know we're living in end times, and unlike many of today's jaded and worthless youth, they have the courage to look 2012 in the face and laugh and while making mean-spirited jokes about your mother. I do have to say, I'm fucking sick of their goddamn James Joyce references though, it makes them sound like a bunch of intellectual masturbators. Yeah, we get it, you're smart and shit. Now play the fucking songs and peel some fucking paint off these fucking walls instead of tickling the balls of that hack of a scrivening mick. At least Kafka had a pair. (www.feralkidrecords.com)

Here's an open challenge to all you *record collectors*: go try and buy a copy of the new VEGETATIVE STATE LP *Feeding Tubes*. It's like trying to find a fucking copy of the FREESTONE 7". Released in the fall of 2009 by some shitheel Columbus label that essentially pressed the record and then put the copies in storage, it has seen little to no press or attention because only about twenty people on the face of the earth have a god damn copy. A cryin' fucking shame, it is. It's an excellent punk rock record that could almost be called hardcore if it were a little more homoerotic. Speaking of which, even I had to do unspeakable things to strike a deal with a particularly poncey English bloke just to get a copy of this. Really snotty and ball-busting, much their mates THE FEELERS, it has an energetically dark edge and primitive weirdness to it, with moments of sheer speed juxtaposed against some go-nowhere nihilist thud. And then there are some purely goofy segments that just make me want to slap them in the face, but for their own good. Overall, just a great and raw record that I wouldn't have any qualms and telling people is what I think punk should sound like in this day and age. A scant 300 copies were pressed (of which about 275 are probably still available!), with almost a dozen cuts packed on the A-Side and an etched B-Side. I'm not even going to mention the name of the *label* who released it, but the spectacled footie fan over at Criminal IQ seems to have possibly thrown the band a lifesaver and has scored some copies for distro. Cheers mate! (www.criminaliq.com)

Horizontal Action magazine was once the finest print zine in the world, treating us to the finest in rock'n'roll and pornography a few times a year, and I hold those back issues near and dear along with my musty back issues of *Forced Exposure*, *Bomp* and *Highlights*. After the print department closed its doors, these intrepid entrepreneurs stepped into the record label game with the HoZac imprint, releasing fantastic records by punk bands like CATATONIC YOUTH and SPIDER and giving collectors and eBay scoundrels fits with their Gold Editions and limited sleeve variants. Their latest long-playing release is something I never thought the name brand responsible for putting a nut sack on the cover of a widely released magazine would have any interest in (but hey, they also released a terrible DUM DUM GIRLS record too), but I'm glad they've diversified their portfolio and pressed up the debut LP by MEDICATION. *This Town* is the title, and as much I hate to deal with the inner struggle I feel whenever I like something that could be branded as a "folk" record, this is one of those instances. Actually, the folk tag in unfair, as this really only fits that bill in that it is one lonely fella strumming a guitar and baring his soul. It's not some hippie happy flowers-n-beads trip though, it's a dark and melancholy journey through the psyche of a young man, dealing with loss/death, love (and lack of) and the difficult emotions life throws our way. Sincere and sometimes harrowing, it's a cathartic listen, especially when you're out of weed and on to the whiskey. Like any sad story, it's the brief glimpses of sunshine in the margins that make it all the more compelling, and for as dim as the lights sometimes get for Mikey on this record, he always seems to give us that brief glimmer of hope in the end. Even though you lost the girl, at least you had the chance to love; that sort of thing. Wonderful lo-fi recording job here, you can almost smell the dry dust of the attic I imagine him setting up his tape deck in, emotive acoustic/electric strum, minimal percussion and his voice is strong enough to tell the tales. A nice departure when you need to wind down and think about all the things you've done. Not punk? Neither are you. (www.hozacrecords.com)

And speaking of heavy metal, remember THE HOOKERS? I sure as fuck do, and they're back with a brand friggin' new single and it's an honest to goodness return to their punk days, before they got a little too deep into the cheesy metal sound. A two-song double-fister, the A-side is "Horror Rises From The Tombs" and it's as good as anything from their prime, a la the *Satan's Highway* LP and their early singles. Trash-riffs and Stoney Tombs shreddage and vox delivered by the Rock'n'Roll Outlaw himself. The flip is a cover of the NWOBHM classic (and my all-time fave single of the genre aside from the ARAGORN 7") "The Mugger" originally done by SHOCK TREATMENT! This one even looks like one of the old HOOKERS 7"s with black-and-white grim reaper imagery and sounds good and dirtily lo-fi. Limited to 500, with 100 on white! (Red Tornado Records)

IN THE RED RECORD DEPT: Good old Larry just keeps plugging away. Aside from announcing the ITR Archives reissues imprint (promising HOMOSEXUALS and CONSUMERS LPs this year) and an extensive BLACK LIPS and CHEATER SLICKS repress campaign, he's also just pressed up the supposedly long-lost third CLONE DEFECTS LP titled *Warlords of Mars*, which should be ready for sale by the time this issue sees print. Bridging the gap between *Shapes of Venus* and the first HUMAN EYE LP, the unearthing of this release adds more legitimacy to the claim that Larry has some kind of pact with Satan for supreme dominance of the garage-punk landscape. Much like you, I'm actually scared at how good this record could possibly be. (www.intheredrecords.com)

COOL SINGLE DEPT: I'm going to have to go local again with this one, and give the press to Rotchester's very own BAD TASTE and their *I Was A Teenage Jack the Ripper* 7". The growing Rotcore scene is going to make some punk things happen this year, with ready-to-be-discovered acts like BRAIN CAR, THE NARCS and LOVE PORK set to light stereos ablaze. BAD TASTE is the flagship act of this snot-nosed armada, and this EP is a delightful and bratty blend of KBD-style nut-kicking, hard-nosed actual garage-*p-u-*

n-k and no-holes-barred 'core, all executed with a deceptive intelligence and vision and plenty of middle fingers flying. This one's gonna leave some marks. (www.feralkidrecords.com)

COOL TAPE DEPT.: America's Greatest Rock'n'Roll Band are back again with another cassette tape to add to their already perfect discography. Yes, HOMOSTUPIDS have done it again, this time with a second odds-n-sods collection cleverly named *Taping the Worm* that features outtakes from *The Load* recording sessions, various FACTORYMEN-esque synth versions of cuts from *The Intern* and some half-speed takes of other favorites, including a secret ELECTRIC EELS cover. And that's just side A! The flip of this 30-minute monster is a live set from last year's Horriblefest, which was surely one the best shows I've seen them play. And I've seen them play a few. Limited to 100 copies, good grief! (www.fashionableidiots.com)

COOL RESISSUE DEPT: With bespectacled collector-scum going googly-eyed trying to score a copy of the recent SCREAMERS and CHRONIC SICK boots, everyone has overlooked a silently released yet super-deadly entry into the Killed By Death-style compilation saga. Riding the coattails of the last two comps in this *style* (*No One Left To Blame* and *Staring Down the Barrel*) and perhaps perpetrated by the same lunatics, the LP is called *No Reason* and features what may be the last dozen gems to be unearthed from the '77-'82 time frame. The centerpieces of this are two tracks from an acetate-only HAMMER DAMAGE 7" that never saw release in '81 which has been recently discovered, an amazing demo cut from THE NOTHING via a cassette unearthed at the Bomp warehouse , yet another *lost* JIMI LALUMIA cut (and this one's actually good!), and the recordings from THE PLUGZ work on the New Wave Hookers soundtrack taken from the master tape which was recently rumored to have been saved from a San Fernando Valley lockbox. Plus, another half-dozen regional obscurities that will have everyone scrambling to modify their saved eBay searches. Look to discerning distros for copies, as this one is straight from Hell, Norway.

That's all folks. We'll see you next time, I gotta go walk the dog… if you know what I'm saying.

Tumbling

The strange thing was that Garrett and I actually ended up becoming close, we would sit in each other's rooms and talk about flashbacks and desire and our fathers and the masculinity we were horrified by; we talked about consent, and whether it was really possible. Garrett couldn't believe I rarely got fucked, and I couldn't believe he thought getting fucked was the only radical choice for faggots like us. We got arrested writing anti-police graffiti on a bus shelter—the ad showed a stick-figure drawing with a gun, shooting at other stick figures, black lines on a white background: "Children Draw What They See, and What They See Is a Crime"—we made a simple alteration, labeling the stick figure with a gun as a cop and the victims as unarmed people of color, and then we went to a nearby café. It turned out that some store owner called the cops, and since Garrett and I both had bright-colored hair we were easily identifiable, they took us to jail, overnight, first to a holding cell by ourselves, once they decided we had sugar in our pants, that's how they put it. I was grateful for that sugar, once I took a look in the other holding cell, everyone arranged on top of one another, there was a fight and someone started screaming and the cops ignored it. After a night in a blank room with those crazy-making pale green walls, we ended up in the queen tank, where everyone assumed we'd gotten arrested for prostitution—I stayed awake while Garrett dozed; some guy was screaming on the phone to his lawyer, he was the only one with a lawyer. Eventually the cops took Garrett and me to separate interviews where they tried to get each of us to say that the other one was the problem but neither of us did—we ended up with time served and 40 hours of community service.

Maybe that's when we really bonded. We decided to practice French together, even though we thought French was snotty we also thought we shouldn't forget the language we had spent so much time learning, with all of our high school dreams of expatriotism. Garrett made those stickers that we loved, his favorite was "trash" because that's what people had always told him he was, white trash but this was when people in the Mission were always having white trash parties, even though none of these people had actually grown up white trash—these were the people who had grown up kind of like me and so I avoided them, not just because of their white trash parties but because I thought they would never know anything I wanted to learn. At the kitchen table, we would talk angrily about those parties, not just the upper-middle-class fetishism but the emphasis on whiteness. Garrett thought the two of us should have sex, but I was never interested—I still noticed how he was trying to be me, at least when he was with me, and I was trying to encourage him to emphasize his differences; sex wouldn't work between us, I said, even though at this point we used the word love to describe one another I just wasn't attracted to him sexually.

I remember those nighttime walks through the Mission and underneath the highway, crossing into South of Market to go to Junk once it moved to the Stud and we all agreed it was over, but it wasn't totally over because we still went there. Now there were straight tourists looking for three-ways, since the club got written up in one of the papers. The first time I went to Junk once I got back to San Francisco I was so worried about running into Zee and how would I feel and then he wasn't there and I could breathe until he was there and I tried to talk to people and act like it was OK, I mean like I was OK but behind their heads I was looking out until I was dancing and then it didn't matter no it still mattered but it made my gestures mean even more.

I remember those conspiratorial walks on the way there, down dark streets and past warehouses and how we would always have these elaborate conversations—we were trying to prepare for the drama and if you looked up at the sky it would frame us, that's what I'm thinking now. Sometimes we looked, and sometimes we didn't. I can picture Laurie first and then Garrett and Andee, since he had moved down to San Francisco while I was in Seattle, we had met at Bauhaus but we really met in my kitchen, once I got back. There were others too and then there was JoAnne.

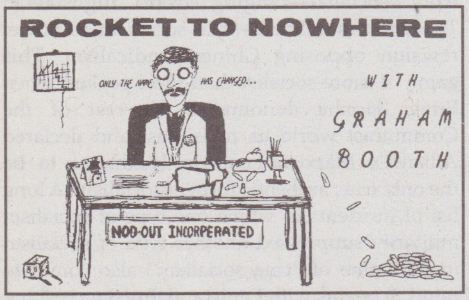
And Melissa, she was the one who liked house music too so sometimes we would go to Your Sister's House instead of Junk, just the two of us and then there wasn't any drama just dancing, Melissa would wonder if any of these women were dykes but if they were then we never found out. I met Melissa at ACT UP and we were the token queers in the activist group that got me to stop doing direct action for a while, there were other queers but they were tokenized for other reasons. That was the group where we held a sleep-out at the mayor's house and at meetings everyone started screaming at me because I thought we should operate by consensus. Or not everyone, but the two people with the most power. Melissa was one of the people who agreed with me but she didn't say anything in the meetings; neither did the other people who wanted consensus. Melissa was kind of like some of my childhood friends, someone so awkward that most people couldn't see her, but her analysis was more skillful than anyone else who I'd met. Like when she met Zee, back when he wanted to be friends with all my friends and so the two of them went out for tea and I got kind of scared that they would become friends and leave me, I knew this was irrational so I didn't say anything. That's how I dealt with whatever I thought was irrational, like when I got jealous sometimes of the people Zee would sleep with, but I knew I shouldn't be jealous and so I didn't talk about it.

After Melissa met with Zee, she said: you know, he totally objectifies you. And I hadn't thought about it that way before, but she was right. Melissa was stuck at her parents' house after dropping out of school—she went to Yale and it traumatized her in some of the same ways that Brown traumatized me, but she stayed longer and it got worse and she tried to kill herself. After she got out of the hospital, she stayed in New Haven because she liked it there, just not Yale, but now she was back at her parents' house, scared of her father in the hallway and sometimes she would stay at my house, especially after Junk. We would share my bed and I would try to encourage her to get away, away from her parents but there was something that meant she couldn't, she would look away when she was trying to say it, voice shaking and I knew.

Once JoAnne moved in, we were a whole house of queer vegan incest survivors. I would go JoAnne's room when I was scared of my father's eyes and then JoAnne started talking about the dirty old man she needed to picture in order to get off, there was no other way—she needed that dirty old man. Finally she realized it was her father and we would hold each other in that way that meant it was okay if nothing was possible and it was okay if everything was possible and then it was just okay. We would sob together, really sob—Zee had held me in this way but then it would all fall apart. With JoAnne the connection was a constant—she had felt it right when we met in DC and that's what made Seattle so possible, and all that space.

But back to our storied San Francisco kitchen, did JoAnne really move in right after Laurie moved out, or was there someone in between? JoAnne and I would paint each other's nails and soak our hands in ice water, we would help each other with our hair dye, the hard to reach places in the back, and then we would get ready to go out. Or get ready not to go out. Sometimes we would combine weird drugs that didn't quite feel like drugs—black beauties that JoAnne brought down from Canada that were supposed to be speed but they were so calm to us that we decided they were caffeine, or ephedrine and Xanax, I still had a lot of Xanax that I'd gotten from my father's medicine cabinet, samples from the company arranged in a big box. We snorted everything on a shard of an old mirror because that's the way we liked it best, we were avoiding the drugs that squeezed us too hard but still we wanted that burn. Then we'd go to La Rondalla for margaritas and the photo booth, was there a photo booth at La Rondalla? There was so much laughter as we would tumble around.

The writing in this column is an excerpt from some crazy memoirish thing I'm working on called The End of San Francisco. *My most recent book is a novel,* So Many Ways to Sleep Badly. *I'm also turning lostmissing, my public art project, into some kind of book-type thing, yay for more books! And I recently finished a new anthology called* Why Are Faggots So Afraid of Faggots? *I know you're wondering the same thing. You can communicate with me via www.mattildabernsteinsycamore.com, which includes past* MRR *columns. Or you can write to me at 537 Jones Street, #3152, San Francisco, CA 94102.*



This month I'm talking about obscure pressing variants. The subject is on my mind because I recently picked up a variation of a well known US hardcore 45 that nobody seems to know about. We record collectors are often pretty cagey with details like this, especially until we can snag a copy of the variant for the collection. I was surprised to land a spare copy a few weeks ago pretty cheaply, on eBay no less, in a listing that seemed to give all the right info. Apparently nobody knew enough to pay attention.

I am talking about New York City's THE MOB. I'm sure most of you are familiar with their well-known pressing variant. The *Upset the System* 7″ EP, released in 1982 on their own Mob Style Records label, came with a Black/White PS and a Red/White PS. It is said that the Black/White PS came first, and it seems to turn up less often than the Red PS. As far as early NYHC EPs go, this is easily one of the best. They were also one of the earliest bands, and show their punk roots a lot more than most of their NYHC peers who didn't get records out until '83.

But I'm not talking about *that* MOB EP. I'm talking about their second 7″ EP, *Step Forward*. Everybody knows it because it's the NYHC EP on colored vinyl... *red* vinyl. I guess if you want to nitpick, the NO THANKS 7″ EP also came on both red wax and black wax, although, while NO THANKS is a personal fave with furious hardcore female vocals, it wasn't really recognized in the canon of NYHC until a few years ago. THE MOB is one of the big six that hardcore collectors have fiended for since the '80s: THE MOB / URBAN WASTE / THE ABUSED / ANTIDOTE / AGNOSTIC FRONT / CAUSE FOR ALARM.

So what's so special about my MOB *Step Forward* EP? It is on *black* vinyl. Who has ever even talked about a black vinyl *Step Forward* EP? I have not heard about it. It is totally possible that there are a bunch of copies floating around, but nobody has ever advertised it. Maybe it's because black vinyl is perceived to be less desirable? Go look at your popsike and collectorsfrenzy, every copy up there is on red wax (except maybe the copy I just bought). Based on my relatively casual research, this seems to be a very rare variation.

I do know one other collector who was aware of it. He already has a copy, so I think he will forgive me for spilling the beans. Being in the Northeast, he has had some contact with the band/label and it sounds like this version was pressed at the same time Mob Style Records was getting additional *Upset the System* EPs and URBAN WASTE EPs pressed. You may be familiar with the incredibly difficult white border URBAN WASTE sleeve? This one-time repressing was apparently the source of both the white border URBAN WASTE sleeve and the black vinyl *Step Forward* EP, both estimated in quantities of 300. I tend to believe it, as neither of these variants show up with any regularity, maybe once a year, if that.

So what does all this thumb twiddling mean? Well, to most people, probably nothing at all. But to a NYHC collector, this is a kind of crazy revelation (pun intended?) to be having circa 2010. An obvious NYHC record variant finally noticed 25 plus years later? I dread what other hardcore pressing variations may be lurking this late in the game.

I should also probably describe what the *Step Forward* EP is all about, since it's actually still out of print. THE MOB's *Upset the System* EP and *We Come To Crush* LP were compiled onto a CD reissue a few years back, but somehow the three songs from the second EP got left off. Some people prefer the second EP to the first EP. I will not go that far, but I'm a fan of the second EP, which has an amped up, punked out hardcore thrash sound, plus a tad of song complexity which is bringing to mind midwestern counterparts DIE KREUZEN. A real grower that lacks that blast of immediacy of the first EP, but gets stuck deep in the recesses your brain with repeat spins. On second thought, maybe I do prefer it!

If pressing variations are your thing, I definitely recommend checking out the *It Never Ends* section on the www.BreakMyFace.com website. G-d knows all of you have already seen it, but it lays out all the minutia in painstaking detail, and many of the variations explained were barely even known until the site let the cat out of the bag. I'm still trying to track down "a" REACTORS *LA Sleaze* 7″ EP, let alone all three sleeve variations. You can find out which pressings you have of each component (vinyl, sleeve, insert) of the GERMS *Forming* 7″. No need to detail any more of it here other than to mention the difficult process of cutting loose my "uncensored" ARYAN DISGRACE 7″ I had a few months back. Who knows if I will ever see one again!

I think I've detailed some of the teeth gnashingly aggravating colored vinyl LP variants out there in a previous column (DIE KREUZEN's maroon wax debut LP and those pesky colored CODE OF HONOR / SICK PLEASURE LPs both come to mind). I found a weird MISFITS *Die Die My Darling* 12″ EP a couple weeks back with a cool cover defect that looks like a smeared watercolor paint job. I'm hoping the same guys who bid $200 for a copy with obliterated off-center labels that run in the grooves will decide it is some *in demand* collectible.

I don't have much more to share regarding pressing variations this month, so I will leave you with what comes to mind as the most puzzling and unnecessarily complicated sagas out there. That would be '80s Swedish partners in crime ANTI-CIMEX and THE SKITSLICKERS, particularly their respective *Raped Ass* and *Cracked Cop Skulls* 7″ EPs. Distinguished *MRR* contributor Stuart Schrader has done a great job of documenting any and every bit of minutia he comes across on his *ANTI-CIMEX ARCHIVE* over at www.shit-fi.com. Ever the internal struggle, as both EPs are easy top ten hardcore EPs for me, I still just own that original first "Hard PS" @ Records version of *Raped Ass* and the standard Swedish "GBG 1982" *Spracktа Snutskallar* PS I claimed back in the early '90s. It's hard to hold back bidding on the iconic ANTI-CIMEX UK Tour Photo Sleeve (on clear wax no less!), or the ultra crude ransom note style Really Fast *Raped Ass* sleeve. Meanwhile SHIT LICKERS have their variety of colored paper Export sleeves and the crushing ultimate Swedish HC skull sleeve, *Skit-Slickers Uber Alles*! Thankfully for you completists out there, my priorities have been geared towards spending my hard earned dollars on 45s I don't already own on vinyl. Maybe someday...

until then, at least I can look.

The UCLA campus is everything you'd imagine a southern California university to be. It's sun drenched and informal, full of tanned, bounding young people, with books in their arms and their eyes on each other. But it houses an archive you would not imagine it to. One that is dark, vast and smells of binding glue and aging paper. The Southern Regional Library Facility, is a storage facility for all the archives, of any media, the UC libraries have amassed that are not in wide circulation because either no one asks for them any more, or they are too old or too fragile or too special to be handled by the average library-goer. It is a massive four stories, with two of those underground, and it houses more than five million items.

"It makes me feel kind of small to be in a room with nearly every word in the history of the English language. The only thing missing is probably some new shitty new one like *webinar*"

"That's probably here too actually, we get the tech journals after they've made the rounds at the regular UC libraries," says Dave, my friend who works here as one of the custodians of the library.

It's dark in here, and cold. The lights only flicker on when you trigger the motion sensors. The movement of another librarian, carting out requested items, lights the far end of the stacks, his light is so far away it dies out into darkness before it reaches us. I can just make out a distant wall of illuminated books. I wonder if he would hear me if I shouted.

Dave pulls a random box from the shelves, and inside are the original cells from the woody the woodpecker cartoons, and a few rows further down on our walk he points out an archive of zines donated by Darby Romeo, creator of *Ben Is Dead*, one of the few classic zines recommended to me that I've never bothered to read.

The grey file boxes are each labeled "The Darby Romeo Collection of Zines (1987-)" inside are alphabetized copies of a smattering of late '80s and '90s zines, the first of which is an old copy of *Book Your Own Fucking Life*. I stare at the "Maximumrocknroll" printed on the cover. Flipping through, there are addresses for Grimple, Neurosis, for old punk houses and clubs I remember that don't exist any more, and lots of things that were before my time. Now *BYOFL* is online, and though I'm on it, I've only ever been sent mass spam emails by shitty promoters. No real connections. It's more convenient to use that the old printed zine since you can't lose it, and it's constantly updated, but it brief web based convenience was totally over shadowed by the rise of social networking sites. MySpace made it practically obsolete. Though I do still keep a listing on there, it's probably more for nostalgia's sake than anything. Looking at this old copy of *BYOFL*, I feel like I'm peeking back into a time I barely remember, when most correspondence required a stamp and an envelope, and you found people through ads, and directories, or just being friends of friends. I don't miss that time, per say, I just have to marvel at how different things have become. Just as I have to marvel at the fact that this punk artifact is here in this archive that houses a copies of old encyclopedias in German, and math theory from last century. We have our own entry in the archives that live unread. It is probably funny to feel so surprised by this, it's like discovering you are a part of the world: Of course you are.

I'm glad to see an archive like this. It gives me hope that long after this magazine is swallowed up by time the words will be held together somewhere, for somebody to read. That our common culture of punk will still have an audience someday in the future, if there is a future.

Is that silly or stupid or self indulgent? To hope that a part of what I love will last somehow? Maybe it is. I know that faced with impermanence lots of people build themselves silly monuments, name children after themselves, cryogenically freeze their heads, or inscribe their names or faces on mountains. Is it the same silly self-importance that makes me happy to see punk here in this bunker of knowledge?

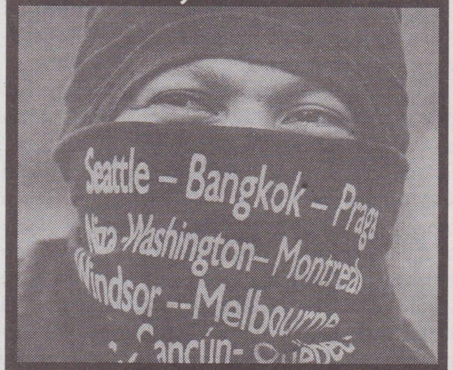
If they do last, these zines and records and things we make, how will they last? We could have digital book and zine archives, and MP3 databases to hear any and every punk record made. I think that would be totally amazing. But I also think there are some irreproducible qualities of an original object too. Its size, its smell, its texture—these are things excluded or distorted by a digital copy. It's not clear to me how these dimensions contribute to my understanding, but I'm sure they do.

The other problem of reliance on a solely digital archive, or even on collective blog based sharing is that, in general, only the things people like or remember or care about are scanned and shared, and I think it may be just as important to preserve the uninteresting, the banal, the garbage, and the over looked. We don't know where the future will take us and what records of the present or past will prove illuminating, or will turn out to be the long lost awesome finds of the future. The *MRR* record collection has a lot of such records, ones that are so bad I cannot believe they take up space on the shelves, but I also could not put on my own shoulders the responsibility of deciding what was not only not important, but would never be important…who can know that? Tim tried. He purged the *unpunk* from the *MRR* collection, and we suffered for it. We lost the Television Personalities, the Minutemen, and other possible gems unknown (along with a lot of actual terrible crap, I'm assured). Things I would consider classic, core to the punk experience. Records that are now being replaced.

I don't think maintaining an archive of your culture, of books, records, art and knowledge is an exercise of ego, or evading mortality, I think it's as nice a gift to the future as you can give. A gift of things they may want or need, maybe things that can help them understand the world that has passed away. But we have to realize that these are things that cannot be guessed at or predetermined. We should just mass it all together, and they can make from it what they will.

Please send all correspondence jocular or vehement to MRR with a donation large or small to assist in the upkeep of the amazing record collection it maintains. Perhaps you will be rewarded for this generosity in the future with access to this archive at www.maximumrocknroll.com

Go Team, Smash State!



"Lefty" Hooligan • What's Left?

Real existing socialism.

This phrase, popular in the 1970s and '80s, was a bit of a misnomer. It was employed primarily by Marxist-Leninists and their fellow travelers to refer to those regimes that called themselves "people's republics" or "people's democracies," two more horrible misnomers. For these true believers in, sycophants of, and apologists for what was once called the Communist Bloc, the term "real existing socialism" was a sly, propagandistic way of simultaneously asserting that this collection of totalitarian, state socialist countries was truly socialist while defending them from the often scathing criticisms of traditional socialists, ultraleftists and idealistic progressives.

"Our critics on the Left can argue endlessly about what socialism *should* be like; this is real, actual socialism in practice."

The patent absurdity of this argument was illustrated well by the many conflicts within "real existing socialism" as to who was really, truly socialist—ranging from Yugoslavian Titoism versus Soviet-style socialism to Soviet revision opposing Chinese radicalism. This game of more-socialist-than-thou peaked when Enver Hoxha denounced the rest of the Communist world as revisionist and declared Albania's Marxism-Leninism-Hoxhaism to be the only true, authentic form of socialism. A long list of incidents in which one type of socialism militarily suppressed another type of socialism in the name of "true socialism" also comes to mind. It begins with Lenin and Trotsky crushing Ukrainian anarchism and the Kronstadt sailors, and culminates with Soviet tanks smashing Hungarian workers councils and Czechoslovakia's "socialism with a human face." The Chinese PLA's demolition of the Shanghai Commune is the bloody postscript.

And need I point out that the number of real existing socialist regimes of this type has drastically declined since 1989?

Instead of arguing that Marxist-Leninist systems aren't really, truly socialist however, let's see what happens when we try to be more inclusive. What happens when we consider staunch social democratic countries like Sweden to be authentically socialist? What happens when even the sometimes extensive networks of producer and service collectives and cooperatives within capitalist societies are classified as valid forms of real existing socialism (from here on out referred to as RES)?

This expanded definition of RES does not cover all forms of socialist organization, and leaves out most political groups and parties, social/cultural associations, and militant unions. The somewhat fuzzy boundary crops up where union workers actually run their enterprises, political organizations provide services such as workers schools, and social/cultural groups delve into things like mutual aid societies. Still, this more inclusive notion of RES does have one particularly important ramification.

Marxism-Leninism, social democracy, and utopian socialism are all well represented in this larger RES. The representation of anarchism and left communism is practically nil. Of course, there is the occasional workers cooperative, collective or commune based explicitly on anti-state, anti-capitalist and anti-authoritarian politics, but as viable movements and social orders, anarchism and left communism are non-existent within RES.

As a former anarchist who retains some identification with left communism, I wish this weren't so. But it is. Anarchism and left communism both champion a number of historically brief revolutionary moments (Russia 1905 & 1917, Germany 1918-21, Spain 1936-39, Hungary 1956, France 1968, etc.) that, while exemplary, were fleeting, and failed to produce lasting, libertarian socialist societies. For anarchists and left communists, RES is not true socialism when compared to these ephemeral revolutionary examples. Yet no anti-state, anti-capitalist, anti-authoritarian RES exists as an alternative.

The reasons why anarchism and left communism have failed to produce lasting revolutionary options are myriad, and vary from the historically specific to rather universal problems. The important fact here is that, without exception, they have failed. At this point, we have three choices available to deal with this fact. We can go along with a seemingly eternal anti-authoritarian optimism to proclaim that, despite this dismal record, the next revolutionary uprising will somehow overcome all odds and be victorious. Second, we can argue that, with a little tinkering and some key changes, we can increase anarchism and left communism's probabilities for future success. Or finally, we can declare anarchists and left communists perennial "beautiful losers" and pronounce their politics bankrupt.

The first is not so much an option as it is a description of insanity, of doing the same damned thing over and over while expecting radically different results. The second choice appears to be more tempered and realistic. Yet it is largely ineffectual due to what I call the Baskin-Robbins syndrome. Hang on, this is going to require an extended frozen desserts metaphor.

After the second World War, when geopolitics polarized between East and West, between the Communist Bloc and the Free World, there were several attempts to create a neo-anarchist/left communist politics that could function as a *tertium quid*. Paris in the 1960s produced a French ice cream called Situationism that became all the rage for decades to come. With its mixture of left Marxist analysis and anarchist spirit, along with a heavy dollop of subjectivism, Situationism was more than just one of thirty-one flavors, more like a basic, ubiquitous vanilla. To boldly mix my metaphors, a friend once described the Situationists as a motley theatre troupe that managed one mediocre performance in Paris 1968, and hasn't done much since. They were no Cirque du Soleil, to be sure.

Returning to ice cream as politics, tastes changed and by the mid-to-late 1970s, Italian autonomist gelato became popular, followed in the late 1980s/early 1990s by the spumoni of Italian anarchism and "action without mediation." Various flavors of anti-globalization dominated the late 1990s/early 2000s, and most recently we've seen a revival of French crème glacée. The Invisible Committee's blend of insurrectionary anarchism and anti-state communism in "The Call" and "The Coming Insurrection" is covered with nihilist hot fudge, and topped with Theorie Communiste sprinkles, Michel Foucault jimmies and Giorgio Agamben crumbles. Study groups of youthful radicals can't seem to get enough of this riotous confection.

[The post-left, anti-politics, anarchy crowd is all over this like flies on shit. Hell, even Diamond Dave Whitaker is doing a TCI study group. Talk about April fools! What more do you need to know that this stuff is doomed?!]

Invariably, these neo-anarchist/left communist concoctions are tried and found wanting. But that's not why I predict that the current French mélange will soon fall out of favor. There's a fickle Baskin-Robbins "flavor of the month" attitude to all of this that belies serious politics. Young revolutionaries flit from one faddish political fashion to another as they might flick between MP3s on their iPods. Needless to say, this is no way to make revolution. Further, it's a guarantee that anarchism and left communism will find no place in RES.

At the risk of coming off as a naïve American pragmatist, I insist that a central criterion of any politics must be that they work. It does little good that insurrectionary anarchism and anti-state communism are now trendy, if they do nothing to advance successful revolution. It means even less if those who advocate such politics are willing to change them at the drop of a hat, just to be *au courant*, whether or not those politics can overthrow state and capital, let alone create and sustain a socialist society.

Which leaves us with our third choice, the bankruptcy of anti-authoritarian politics. I'm loath to consider this option, even as reality backs me into this corner. Maurice Merleau-Ponty contended, in *Humanism and Terror*, that all of Stalin's crimes—his terror and purges, his forced collectivization and calculated famines, his show trials and gulags—could be forgiven if only the Soviet Union had achieved a truly liberated, humanistic socialism. Flipping this, can the emancipatory ideas of anarchism and left communism be countenanced in light of their shoddy, lackluster performance in the real world? I doubt it, given the paucity of a real existing anti-authoritarian socialism.

What we are left with are beautiful dreams that fail to become anything more than reverie, and dreamers who continually romanticize their own failures. That's not enough.

PERSONAL PROPAGANDA... To find out my real name purchase my book, *End Time*, from AK Press (POB 40682, SF, CA 94140-0682) for $10. The book is called *Fim* in Portuguese and can be ordered from Conrad Editora (R. Maracaí, 185, Aclimação, 01534-030, São Paulo-SP, Brasil) for R$ 24,90. I can be contacted at hooligentsia@mac.com.

ALL FOREIGN JUNK

DANISH CASSETTE

The tape I'm excited about this month comes from the high hills of Denmark by a band called DE HOJE HAELE. The tape is called *Franskbrod*. This tape was released in France.

Allow me once again to take a trip into the k-town k-hole and be lulled with the memories of the AMDI PETERSENS ARME debut 7", a band that sounded reared in '70s punk but with the bloated titty of DC hardcore dribbling a little milk on the chin. We all know what MINOR THREAT covering WIRE sounded like; imagine if WIRE had a stab at "Out Of Step," and you've got it. What a sound that would be! The ferocity and annihilation of hardcore, with the jerky art-punk feel. Hard to do right, a few bands tried it in the '90s but their ambitions were to be recognized as artistically innovative or cultural subversives. APA are hardcore, from the cut off sleeves to the lyrics about skateboarding. Stalwarts.

The legacy of this band, their offshoots and side projects, would have an enormous impact on their home city. The young pups from DE HOJE HAELE were probably barely beginning to erase the moral lessons from Hans Christian Anderson, when that enormous burst of energy that carried APA, GORILLA ANGREB, NO HOPE FOR THE KIDS and YOUNG WASTENERS (etc.) out into every corner of the world began to falter and slow up pace. They definitely have listened to the first APA single, sure, and

probably a few pebbles of '60s proto punk. With a sound that draws from the hook laden punk pop of KBD compilations than hardcore, they still have a slight WIRE / SWELL MAPS / UK weirdness to them that really carries the songs.

The band gets in behind the drummer: he holds a fairly consistent pound, bass lines it up, and guitar stabs in and out with a very flat production. Over this, the vocalist has a real flair for that lazy, bored tone that can sound like a dude reading a grocery list to appease a cantankerous filial drama, with the occasional burst of feeling that is usually harmonized by the band. This guy is reserved and doesn't want to show his cards. I appreciate this style of singing a lot.

Once again, let's call up WIRE as a reference point. Their matter-of-fact vocal styles were informed by art school: they were making pop music without the usual depth of emotion for very specific reasons, but when they really wanted to stick it into your heart (think about that opening chord sequence in "Fragile!") they just had a drop a few notes and soften the tone. This guy from DE HOJE HAELE gets how to make this work: I think he's spent a lotta time listening to how the vocalists in early American punk exaggerated emotion and early UK punk satirized / crucified it, and chose the easy path in neglecting it. But he does it well, these songs would sound awful with an impassioned political pleading and they'd sound forced with a scornful scummy sneer. Like this, with the vocals so uncertain and lost in the mix, the sound has an awkward character, like that MINOR THREAT song "Stumped" that wonders around the studio kicking dust balls and concludes with Ian mumbling non-commitally, "was that good enough? I think so." But that song sucked, and these songs don't. There, my friends, is progress.

If the impression they're trying to deliver is one of repressed teen sexual ambition ala '60s garage with the cold paranoia of '80s punk hardcore, they've succeeded creating something that's bleak and energetic, that sometimes struts and sometimes falters. This is a great cassette (Dead Kids Records are responsible), particularly recommended to fans of the old Texan punk band called THE NEXT who I feel had a similar idea of dark, tuneful punk.

AUSTRALIAN VINYL

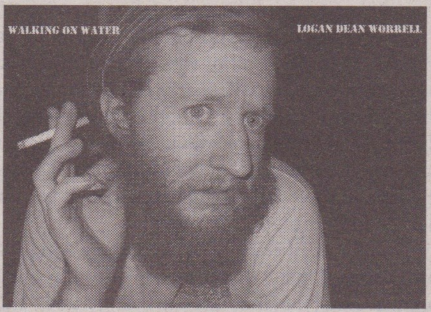
Melbourne band USELESS CHILDREN have been slogging it out hard the last couple of years, playing most every week, and developing their sound past the hyperactive thrash of their demo into something very deranged and very heavy. They are about to tour the US, and have a new 7" to christen the American soil with before they touch. Their LP, released at the end of 2009, has the sound but not the songs, but from the sounds of this 7" (released on Criminal IQ) since that recording this band have been sharpening their knives and eating a lot of protein. Informed by that moment at the end of the '80s where Ginn and company's persistence was beginning to make a mark and suburban garages once again rattled with amplifier blast, I can still hear the Jap hardcore that their early material most resembled (especially COMES) buried under the suffocating weight of endless, nameless guitar tracks, and this is a great thing.

UK FANZINE

More Noize from London is the topic of the day. I have two issues: #2, a split with Croatian zine *Vapaus* and #3, a half size but twice as fat solo project. Editor Tony is a hyperactive, busy guy: his *punksishippies* website uploads obscure old fanzines from all over the planet on regular schedule, and he's spit out a couple issues of this in a short period of time. The subject matter is noisecore, primarily by the Japanese. His enthusiasm and knowledge of the subject carry the zine where his writing can't, which is a refreshing alternative to the legion of modern fanzines steeped in cynicism and muscle flexing, but this does mean that a lot of the zine is easy to flip through. There's a section of #3 devoted entirely to the machinations of the noise core scene and Tony's impression of its hostility to MySpace is that it is uber-elitist. His defense of MySpace is a little odd, and I certainly don't share his point of view, seeming to boil down to the argument that without it, so many bands would go unnoticed and neglected. His response to this was to start a fake band, which would only exist on MySpace called STATE ADULTS, and he details the story and reactions from insiders to the joke and those who had no idea. It's certainly a step above people reporting on their masturbation habits or menstruation cycle.

OK, I'm being a little excessively critical, because for the most part I really appreciate the sentiment and delivery of *More Noise*. It's impassioned and excited and devoted to spreading the good word about ear damage, and few fanzines in the world devote themselves so exclusively to worship of GAI, CONFUSE, et al. I've learned a couple band names worth tracking down. This fanzine is kind of a print out of a blog, and it reads like one too. I like fanzines that ignore digital reality, or exist to spite it.

If you play punk, hardcore, garage noise or any music with a bit of grit and rawness to it, or if you write a fanzine that loosely covers the same sonic territory, and you *don't* live in the US, Japan or Sweden, please get in touch. My address is: Daniel Stewart / PO Box 239 / North Carlton Victoria 3054 / Australia.

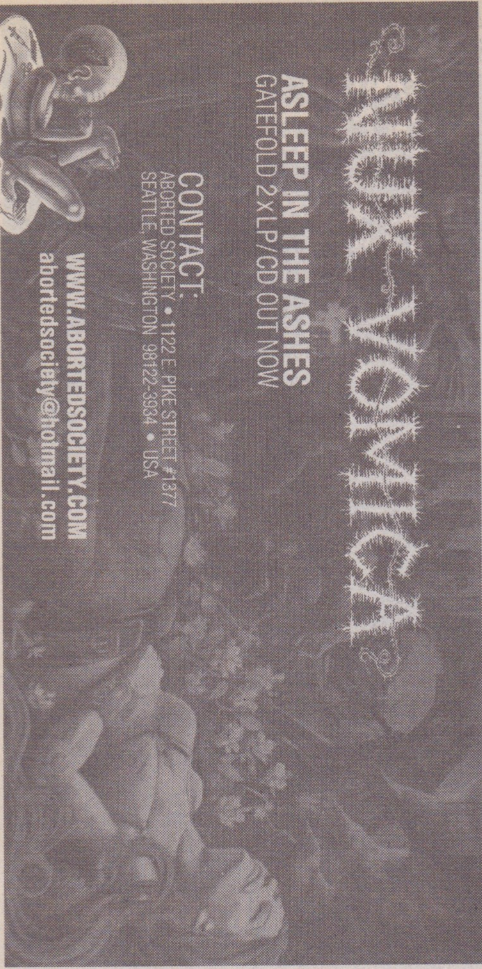


Austin is like a ghost town tonight. All the streets are empty. There are no people walking their dogs, no one's waiting for the bus, nothing. It's like fucking Christmas or the grocery store on a Sunday night at 3 am. All the businesses closed early, from Whataburger to Cherrywood coffeehouse. Only thing open is the liquor store. It's the Super Bowl, baby, and if you ain't from the south, then you might not understand what the big hoopla is all about. I mean, hey, you might like the shit, but you I don't think you really *understand* it. And that's cool. I can dig it.

Football in Texas is a huge fucking deal. Kids grow up imitating their favorite Dallas Cowboys players in their respective front yards with other neighborhood kids; their Dads dream of being able to watch their sons play in the big game against the rival school. Shit is just like Friday Night Lights or Varsity Blues or what have you. Young girls get all dolled up and head down to the game just to support their team. Everyone loves the shit. Nights in high school were filled with jocks and squares inside watching the game and us scumbags in the parking lot sniffing glue. It was very much a part of our day-to-day lives to hear about football. As we get older, no matter where we are in life, we can always rely on the comforting fact that sometime in February people get together and BBQ some shit or fry some shit and watch grown, rich people beat the shit outta each other for mere sport. Just to entertain us. What a fucking world we live in.

So here I sit, all alone in the house usually filled with loud assholes and fucked up dogs. I had no idea the game was on, but I got stoked, because this meant I could jack off on the couch for a change (one of my favorite Sunday activities). For about a second, I thought about maybe going to a Super Bowl party just to meet up with a few people, ya know, just for shits, and then I remember that football is the dumbest fucking thing on the planet. I don't even wanna tell you what clever little quip my dad says about football. I don't know about you assholes, but I spent the better part of my formative years getting the shit beat out of me by guys that play *fooootball*. Now, why would I wanna support these piece of shit jock motherfuckers? Why would I ever want to think about all wedgies, swirlies, or constant name-calling ever again? I thought my name was *fag* until I was seventeen.

There was this kid I went to high school with. His name is Justin Blalock. He's built like a brick shit house, and from what I remember, always has been. He's had a pretty amazing career, it seems. I don't really keep up with it, but every once in a while I'll see his name in the paper. Started playing varsity ball when we were freshman; he did the whole college ball thang and now plays in the NFL for whom, I have no idea. I do know that he's made a literal shit ton of fucking money. He's also the asshole who gave me this huge scar under my chin, leaving me with this roach beard on my face for life. I remember it like it was yesterday. We were in the hall and one of his limp dick, date rape buddies dared him to see if he could choke me unconscious. When I finally stopped kicking and screaming, he just dropped me like a rock, straight on my face. Blood was everywhere and when I finally came to, all I saw were his size nineteen Jordans walking about in the abyss of the hallway, high-fiving Skip and Kiel (pronounced Kyle) all along the way. Fuck that guy. I wonder what the statute of limitations of suing somebody for assault is. Surely, I have just cause. It's because of him I hate football so much, making me a social outcast in my own home. Texas,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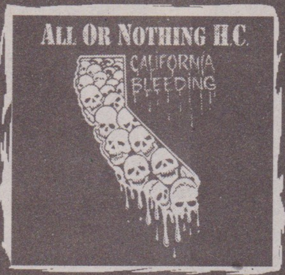

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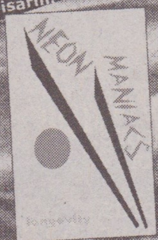

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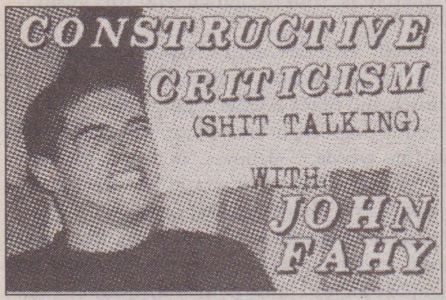
that is.

Did people forget that football is for jocks? Has football turned into the new fixed gear bicycle? Just because Tragedy likes the Seahawks don't make it all right. What's next? Mixed martial arts between sets at Chaos in Tejas? Bruce Roehrs cage match with Layla? So many good jams about sports. Void did it. Gorilla Biscuits did it and those fuckers were basically jocks. First Christians, now jocks. Jesus Christ. Payton Manning?

What's the appeal? I just don't get it. I'm asking seriously. Someone please write me and let me know. I'm not even fucking with you. Tell me why you like football. Tell me why you like to see to rich men beat the shit outta each other. If you just wanna see people fight, come down to Austin, I'll take you to the homeless shelter downtown and you can watch hobos beat the shit outta each other for as long as you want. It's better than pay per view and you can drink Thunderbird while you watch. Are people into this shit to live vicariously through these yuppies? Check out the big game, then go to sleep fantasizing about scoring the winning point and getting to fuck the cheerleader? Just because they have a sick tribal sleeve, doesn't make them cool. People I work with who hate football were telling me they watch the *big* game just for the commercials. That's even worse! The fucking commercials?! It's like the devil is shitting on my face right now. I can't take this shit. I'm not gonna lie, if I was a billionaire I would totally spend a million fucking dollars to shoot a commercial of Timmy taking a shit, so all the douchebags watching FOX have to see it. That's something I could get behind.

Come to think of it, why the fuck am I talking shit on how people spend their free time? Just last night I found myself at some weird kinda *clown rave* with a bunch of free loving gypsy, hippie type dickheads complete with girls wearing pasties hanging from hula hoops suspended from the ceiling. I should probably kill myself or at the very least turn on the TV for the post game show.

Send bullshit to: ldworrell@gmail.com



The Shame And Humiliation Of American Bands Touring Europe: Part Two

Where I left off last: Day one. Merkit arrives in Europe, plays squatted former Italian Communist Youth HQ outside Pisa. Day two. Outdoor fest in Bergamo, Italy; much drinking, many people, shit on hand, dancing, collapsed table, twelve-hour sleep.

I awoke in France, smelling like total shit. My sleep had been completely rehabilitative, so I did not feel like shit, regardless of my immense stupidity and absurd behavior the previous night. As I began stirring in the solo-passenger backseat, one of the dudes from the other band we were touring with, turns to tell me I'd said something offensive to him the night before, "but it's alright." I still do not know if this is true. I realize my bandmate, Nevin has had to drive the entire twelve-hour trip that I'd just slept through, and I feel pretty bad and irresponsible. I'd been awake maybe twenty minutes when Nevin hit a parked car in the narrow-ass streets of Bordeaux. The damage isn't serious and we're close to the venue, so we just go on as if nothing happened.

Tibeault (tih-bowl) is the name of the dude that has booked our Bordeaux show. It's located in a very, very old building, the basement of a pub. We're starving, and this happens to be the one show that has made us meat. We bypass it and head straight for the rice, tomatoes and bread. Such simple food never tasted so good. Nevin, driven weary and insane without sleep, attempts a nap while we set up in the basement. When we finally play, the almost-ancient stone in the basement makes everything sound killer. I get to talk to our Euro-tour host, Iacopo a good bit during this show, and he seems more and more awesome. He gives me some Italian phrases to say when we reunite with his friends in Magdalene (also Italians) at an upcoming show in Austria. He teaches me, "God is a dog (*Dio Cane* [CAR-NAY])", and "God is a pig (*Porco Dio*)." Italian atheists seem to be the most fervent haters of Christianity, perhaps not surprisingly. Iacopo also explains to me that his friends in Magdalene also have a term for the kind of ridiculous behavior I'd exhibited the night before, which translates in English to, "monstering around." Tibeault lets us stay in his tiny apartment for the night and we take off for Germany the next morning.

On the way out, we pass Paris and vaguely see the Eiffel Tower in the distance, as well as signs for the Maginot Line. Unfortunately, we don't have time to get really silly with tourist shit. We are heading for the German city of Trier, located on the border of France and Germany. We pass two of Trier's most impressive offerings on the way to the show, both of which have survived from the times of the Roman Empire: the gate to the city itself, and a gladiator arena. We are late, so as soon as our hosts in Trier greet us, they usher us upstairs to eat quickly before the show. Our hosts are from Danse Macabre, and they are going to be playing with us tonight. They have cooked us an incredible meal, a kind of faux-chicken and vegetable stew with delicious bread. As soon as we've scooped the last bite, we're taken to the show, which goes off well at Danse's practice space.

As incredible as the short tour had been so far, our next stop outside Frankfurt would completely blow us away. We drove up along side a massive stone fence and Andy from Her Breath On Glass (who were on the tour with us and had previously played the venue) said, "This is it on the right." Nevin, looking at the massive stone mansion and not understanding said, "Where?!" To which Andy replied, "This, all of this."

The building was a four-story, massive mansion set on property the size of a substantial park. We were to find out that the building had once been the home of a wealthy, elite family who at some point in time ran into trouble and had their assets seized by the state. It had now been zoned for public events, recreational and cultural activities.

Outside there were gargoyle statues typical of what you'd imagine would adorn the home of an upper-crust family of the Nazi era. We entered through two massive wood doors. Marble floors led us to a living room with fireplace that at least four of us could have fit into. The ceilings in this room were two stories high and an enormous wooden staircase led us past large stain-glassed windows to the upstairs kitchen and pantry. There, we went up and found many stacks of beer and soft drinks. Sabine was our host for the evening; friendly, redheaded, freckled and impossible not to crush on. She showed us out to the stone balcony, which itself was the size of a small cafe. About a dozen people sat on the low stonewalls and at tables in the sunshine, drinking and eating. The resident caretaker of this castle was grilling marinated seitan steaks on a barbeque. Nevin and I walked to the edge of the balcony, which overlooked the trees on the ground. He turned to me and said, "This is fucking incredible."

In the time before the show started, we tried to find out as much as we could about the mansion. We were told the story of the family and what its uses had been turned to. The surrounding anarchist and anti-fascist flags were explained when we were told that the castle was used as a meeting place for anti-fascist groups that would congregate before traveling to intercept neo-Nazi marches and rallies. The top floor—which we would never see, unfortunately—housed as many as four families at a time. These were refugee families whose status in Germany was uncertain, but whose resident statuses were being fought for by leftist groups. On top of all of this, all kinds of music was performed there.

The room we play has a stage, and apparently was originally designed for rich people to be entertained here. I wonder what they would have thought of us. The sets that night are recorded and we are given copies. Afterward, we go into a room off of the "theater" room and hang out on couches and get into the seemingly endless supply of beer. Sabine tells me about Frankfurt and we joke around and talk for a long time. Nevin has now taken his turn to get silly with alcohol and once it's become obvious that he's in the bag, Iacopo says in his Italian accent, "Nevin—now you are monstering around!" We'd made it.

Nevin and I, still in disbelief, spend the rest of the night exploring the mansion.

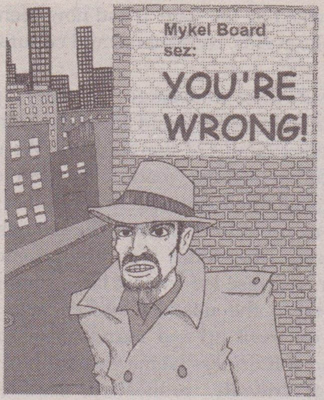
To Be Continued...

ENDNOTES:

1. Consult the Cult Maternal folk for copies of the Ant Parade/Body Rot split 7", it is excellent. www.cultmaternal.blogspot.com

2. Get at my friend Joe for copies of the Waking Up Hurts tape: www.flwebwizzard .com/wtfhttrecords

3. Send me packages, demos, mixtapes. Please. fahy_john@hotmail.com / John Fahy, 15011 Lakeside View Dr., Apt. 2402, Fort Myers, FL 33919.



Don't know what I want but I know how to get it.
—*Johnny Rotten*
Know what I want, but I don't know how to get it.
—*Mykel Board*

Out my window, rain streams in torrents against the glass, bouncing drop-by-drop on the gray Manhattan streets. Rainwater soaks the legs of my pants... a walk to the bank... and back. Why did I walk to the bank in the rain? Someone has used my debit card number to buy $1,000 worth of disco DJ equipment from Radio Shack in New Jersey.

The appropriately named Chase Fraud Department said that all I had to do was fill out an electronic form. The money would be back in my account "the next business day." Yeah right.

It's been a week. Imagine a thousand bucks missing from your bank account for a week. There go the credit card bills, the rent, beer. I'm gonna have to mug a wino to survive. But that's only the end of week 3 of the beginning of the worst decade of my life.

Back up: I shudda been happier than a feminist at a castration. New Year's 2010. The start of my seventh decade. Seventy years, Jesus fuckin' Christ.

God said, "Let there be light."

I turn on the switch. That's how old I am.

This is the first month of my seventieth year. New Year's Eve was good. The Bear, my best Japanese friend was there with Gilberto, my best Mexican friend, and Marilyn, my best New York friend. We got pleasantly soused at The Peculier Pub, my favorite locale in The City.

Part of why I've lasted this long is that I have reasons to live. I knew I could never die before going to Mongolia. So I went to Mongolia. OK, I will live through writing a book. I wrote a book. Two books. Okay, now, I want a party where a girl comes out of a cake.

Everybody has seen a girl —usually a blonde with tits out to here— come out of a cake... in The Movies,. It's a mainstay. I guess it also happens on Broadway and in advertising.

But who's seen it in real life? Anybody you know? I didn't think so. But I want to. I want to really have a party where a girl comes out of a cake. Where, she dips her hands in the frosting and tickles my nose with it. I lick it off her breasts. Mmmm lemon. Can't die without doing that, can I?

AND, I found the girl and I found someone to make the cake. My best pal, Marilyn (right name for a girl to come out of a cake... but she's making it) and Lola (right name for a girl to come out of a cake... and she's coming out of it.), Marilyn's making me a great surprise birthday party at the end of the month.

She forks over $1,000 reserving Bar One-Oh-Eight, where we drink every Monday night. We're pals with the bartender and should score a bunch of extras... as well as tolerance for er... unusual activities.

Marilyn paid for three hours of free booze, an open bar, and food... Dozens of my friends (whose number always increases when there is free booze and food) will be there. Marilyn is a goddess!

As for the rest of the month, I was going to go through a narrative. Go to each item, just when nothing else can go wrong, something worse happens. January may be the worst month of my life where no one dies. (I'm so not sure about that either. I still have six more days for someone to keel over.)

I was gonna tell you about the crashed computer... the $1000 replacement, the pictures, data, writing, lost... me, leaving my apartment the next day... locking the door... the key spins... nothing happens... it's 8:30 AM... I can't lock my apartment and I have to be at work in 20 minutes. The door stays open all day.

Next day... I replace the lock... and lose the new key... a wart develops on my eyelid, $50 at the dermatologist's.

"Maybe it won't come back," says the doctor as I leave with a patch.

At work, I throw a hissy fit because the office manager complains about me wasting money making copies... I throw three quarters (25 cent pieces) at her...There! That'll pay for your fucking copies!!! Now she hates me... won't talk to me... Workplace harassment or something.

Then, there's the four-hundred dollars' worth of dental work to replace a gold inlay lost in Italy... the twelve hundred dollars' worth of Radio Shack goods I already told you about... charged falsely on my debit card. (No I still haven't gotten the money back)... There's more. My doctor says I've got Macular Degeneration. I'll probably go blind in two years. I figure it's from the "generic Viagra" I got in Trinidad all those months ago... I used it three times and only scored once. Want more?

Fuck it. There's too much for the 2000+ words I'm allowed here. The headaches and skin eruptions. The food spilled on my only clean clothes. The toilet backed up and overflowing all night. What gets me through it all is THE GIRL, THE CAKE. Things are so bad I consider sticking my head in the oven... the microwave... but I've got a birthday party coming. A girl coming out of a cake.

Do you think this portends? Does it sound like a set-up? Like a joke where this guy walks into a bar and asks if he can have a girl come out of a cake? You bet! The joke's on me.

Marilyn walks past the bar today. On her way to work. The place is closed. Papered up. Gone. Skedaddled. Outta here. Nothing. Bar, One Oh Eight is Bar, Zero Zero Zero. Not only has this decades' luck set me back several thousand dollars, it's set my best friend back a grand.

So what am I going to do? How can I face it? It's unrelenting. Every day there's something else. Today, my statement comes from Chase. The $1000 from Radio Shack is still listed. There's also an Albanian restaurant claiming I owe more than $100 for a meal I ate two months ago! I'm so depressed I ignore it. Don't give a rat's ass. Can't pick up the phone to complain.

I'm rarely depressed. My life's been pretty good. But now, I want to kill.... passers-by... that nice bum on the corner who I give a quarter to every day... Anybody. None of the usual shit works any more. Find something worse?.. Someone in shittier shape than me? Haiti? Of course their lives are worse than mine... well, maybe not. They're dead. Afghanistan? They've got a cause. Me? A girl and a cake are not enough. I feel like my head's gonna explode. I've hung up on a dozen people so far today. Tech support! Chase! Amex! FUCK YOU! (click) FUCK YOU! (click) FUCK YOU! (click) My skin burns, like it's been sanded or scraped by a sharp knife...

I want to destroy. Break something. Knock someone's teeth out. Sounds like punkrock, doesn't it? Maybe it's time to start a band again. In the meantime, I'm gonna stay 69. Refuse to have a birthday. If God wants to fuck with me, I'll show her. Come on! Think you can take me? Try it!

ENDNOTES: [email subscribers (god@mykelboard.com) or website viewers (www.mykelboard.com) will get live links and a chance to post comments on the column]

—>Thank heaven for little boys dept: In Chattanooga Tennessee a 4-year old boy was found roaming around at night. He was drinking beer and wearing a little girl's dress, taken from a neighbor's house. The reason?

It's not clear, but the boy's mother said he wanted to be with his father, who was in jail.

—>Small victories dept: Thanks to a lawsuit filed by Americans United for Separation of Church and State, a federal judge has ruled that a South Carolina license plate, sporting a cross and the words "I Believe," is unconstitutional. It's not clear whether it would be constitutional if you had a choice between a cross, a Star of David, a Crescent, or a Pentagram. But only a cross, for some reason, violates the establishment of religion clause of the constitution. I can't imagine why.

—>Kyle Nonneman is back in jail dept: That doesn't surprise me. once they get you, they want to keep you. What does surprise me... but shouldn't... is the reason stated in the "report to the judge"

I quote:

Samples of Nonneman's work under the name "Nothingistrue" include the following:

The Passion of Misanthropy
Cunt Envy
Right to Kill
Dead Little Girls
Once You've Killed Someone Life's Shit
(That last one sounds like a plea NOT to kill!)

Worse than that, the parole-ending guy writes in his report: it appears he (Kyle) subscribes to a Nihilist philosophy.... Typically Nihilists reject social, legal, moral and religious norms. His thoughts and beliefs are clearly spelled out in his writing, music and posts on his MySpace page.

Can you believe the cops/courts using music, thoughts, beliefs, and MySpace to jail someone? Uh... yes, you can believe it. This is America, after all.

Write to Kyle at: Kyle Nonneman, #691768, 1120 SW 3rd St, Portland OR 97204

—>I wonder if she called them "old farts" dept: One of my new heroines is Teanne Harris of DesPlaines IL. Six days before her scheduled wedding, her fiancé... er... pulled out. Instead of trying to get whatever refund she could, she just gave the whole celebration (food, DJ, drink, kit and caboodle) to the local old folks' home. This turning a tragedy on its head is just great. It's even better than the original plan. Marriage is a sucky slave-related government institution. Old people are cool. Ten punk points Teanne.

—>Polling the 'digitally active' dept: PC Tools recently commissioned a survey investigating online habits.

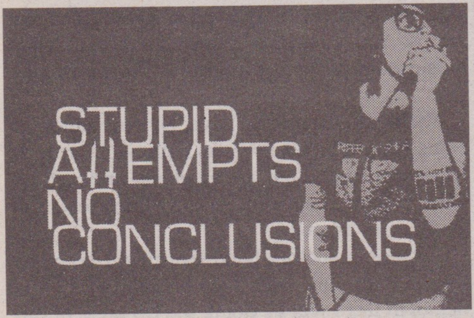
Here are the results: 57% of people surveyed would give up alcohol before giving up the Internet. Eleven percent would give up their job and 8.6% would go without sex to stay connected!

Why is it so hard to give it up?

Social media ranked first with 68% of participants responding that socializing with others would be the hardest Internet activity to give up. 30% indicated that one of the hardest online activities to sacrifice would be porn!

I don't think PC Tools gets it. People don't *give up* sex for porn. Porn *is* sex. You just don't have to make breakfast for it in the next morning.

As you probably know, Mykel is due to spend the next twenty years at a medium security facility in Tuscaloosa. MRR will handle his correspondence. You can write to him c/o us. Thanks.



I don't think I would have stayed in Newfoundland if it weren't for Dan and Melissa. A few weeks after I showed up here, they called me up and asked if I was interested in starting a band with them. They'd both been fired from their exploitative homecare jobs and had been sitting around their house, smoking joints and writing blazing riffs. Could I do vocals and could my partner play drums? Yes! So we started this whirlwind double-date band called Rumours and they would tell me these crazy stories about living up in the Canadian territory called Nunavut. Melissa had been working in a mental health facility and one of the residents had been put on an ice floe to drift off into cold, cold death by her family. Also, they would serve "country food," which was a lot of raw, frozen fish and meat that was buried, then dug up, then eaten. Anyway, they now live up there permanently in the capital city, Iqaluit, population 6000, which sucks for me.

Juls: I have this theory that you guys are the most northern punks in Canada. At first, I was thinking the entire western hemisphere, but probably there are some punks in Alaska. I think where you live is weirder, though. Can you tell me about it?

Melissa: Currently, Iqaluit is cold as fuck and dark for 70% out of the day. It can be a really peaceful place and life there is generally really easy (minus the isolation). There are however a lot of social problems because of the history that's involved.

Dan: Basically, the Canadian government is attempting to compensate for the cultural genocide created by residential schooling, which essentially forced Inuit to abandon their language and traditional ways of life. This obviously created a fuck load of hostility and resentment, which is still felt today.

Melissa: This may sound blunt and negative, but it's the truth, at least from our perspectives (so far, at least). It's a totally different place if you travel here as a tourist versus if you live here permanently. If you asked a random tourist their opinion would most likely differ greatly. Aside from the shit, I like living here and culturally, there is a lot to offer.

Dan: And the physical landscape is beautiful and unlike any other place in Canada.

Juls: What do you mean by "the government is attempting to compensate." How?

Dan: Recently, Steven Harper made a public apology on behalf of the Canadian government regarding the forced allocation of Inuit children into residential schooling. As well, the Canadian government paid settlements to those who were made to attend said schools. There are other measures taken in order to assuage the situation—priority hiring given to land claims beneficiaries as well as housing allowance, free post-secondary education, and entitlement to grant money (education, arts, etc.).

Honestly these issues are beyond my immediate experience, but living here, you get a first-hand perspective as to how these measures affect the Nunavimmiut (this term is inclusive for both land claims beneficiaries and otherwise).

Juls: Why did you move there?

Melissa: We lived there for a bit in 2008 and decided to go back after finishing school. My sister was living there too, but she moved away before we even arrived. I was able to get my old job back, which was a big motivation.

Juls: So what do you guys do up there?

Melissa: I work at a live-in mental health treatment center.

Dan: I work at a children's group home.

Melissa: Aside from work, we cook a fuck ton, party a bit, listen to music, and hang out with our dogs.

Dan: Yeah, we got two dogs and they occupy most of our time. The rest of our time is divided among the aforementioned activities as well as getting tattooed by our roommate Nate, who is learning how to tattoo and using our bodies as practice skin.

Melissa: We also play old Nintendo games on the Wii.

Juls: Melissa, you're from the middle of nowhere anyways, right? Grandfalls, which is in central Newfoundland? Basically. Without an immediate, geographic punk community, do you still feel a part of the overall punk community? How are you guys staying punk?!

Melissa: At times it feels so separate from what I was used to; it bums me out. I miss going to shows and playing shows and being involved in a local punk community. At the same time, I feel like location doesn't define who you are or what you believe in. I stay connected whatever way I can and look forward to eventually moving somewhere and meeting up with people who share similar ideals and interests as me.

Dan: We're punk wherever we go, Juls, you should know that.

Juls: What is the culture, like amongst the white people who have moved up there to work? Are most people sympathetic to the history of fucked-up-ness the people there have endured or are people generally assholes?

Melissa: There is a strange mix of people living in the arctic. It seems like people are there to help mostly, but obviously I can't answer for all. There is a serious push to have the government infrastructure Inuit-run, however that may take some time.

Juls: What surprised you most about moving there?

Dan: We were really well prepared for a big change. Not to say that nothing was surprising, but we sort of knew what to expect. The cold is a bit of a shock. Thinking about negative 60 degrees is different than experiencing it.

Juls: Is that how cold it gets?

Dan: On an average day, it's between negative 20 to negative 30. But during some blizzards it's been like negative 65 or something. We don't even leave the house.

Melissa: Because our eyes will freeze.

Juls: Soundtrack for staying stoked on the tundra?

Melissa: Punch, White Lung, Brilliant Colors, Masshysteri, Pissed Jeans.

Dan: Marked Men, Slices, Bongripper, Condominium, Finally Punk, Mayyors.

Melissa: If anyone ever moves to Iqaluit, look us up: melissamurr@hotmail.com and dan.galway@gmail.com.

A few months ago I wrote about the rising cost of records. I pointed out that the transition from mail order and record stores to online e-commerce as a means of record distribution meant that added fees were like a "tax" on the cost of records bought on line. Furthermore, this money goes directly to large corporations, rather than to say, bands or labels.

As a means of illustration, my outfit, Havoc Records and Distribution, last year paid $2426 in credit card and Paypal fees, $490 in eBay fees, and $1243 dollars for web hosting, DSL, site maintenance etc. That's $4159 a year in expenses that didn't exist for a label in the golden days of DIY hardcore. Back then the big expense was advertising, in the form of zine ads, and free copies of records to radio shows and fanzines. This could add up to a lot of postage and time, but the money and records mostly stayed inside the scene. There was once a vast proliferation of punk fanzines, good and bad, supported by record label ads. Now my advertising expense is under $1000 a year. In fact it's primarily ads in this magazine. I quit mailing out review and radio promo copies and placing magazine ads a few years ago because it no longer seemed to have any impact. Furthermore, the number of decent zines covering music I liked has shrunk to a small handful. So instead the beneficiaries of my record labels non-postage and pressing related costs are corporations like Visa, American Express, and Paypal/eBay. At least most of my web expenses go to local independent companies. While this is probably not a big surprise to most people under 30, it's a big change from the way punk record distribution was done in the past, and most importantly, in the period when most of the punk ethics and ideals were forged. That Crass or Dischord put "pay no more than… or why pay more" on the covers of their records seems quixotic and quaint in our time, but was once taken quite seriously as punk bands sought to control the price of their records and who was able to profit from their work.

As most readers know, I have long been a champion of Swedish and Finnish Hardcore on these shores. The Finnish scene of the early '80s remains one of most powerful, intense and prolific scenes of the hardcore movement. Given that Finland has a population of but five million (about the same as my home state of Minnesota) its contribution to hardcore punk has been exceptional. During the '90s I was waving the flag for Finnish hardcore, distributing releases by that country's current bands, and dubbing tapes of the out of print classics. The reissue mania of the past few years has meant that most all of the essential classics of Finnish punk and hardcore have been re-pressed on vinyl, with many more on CD and uploaded to MP3 blogs and file sharing sites. There was a time in the '90s that I thought many of these bands would be all but forgotten except by a small cult of record collectors. Now Kaaos, Riistetyt, Bastards, Appendix, Terveet Kadet, Rattus et al are front-page news again with records and CDs in bins and MP3s in rotation. This has led labels and fans to dig a little deeper into the Finnish scene and release some of the bands that only made it to compilations and demo tape. Notably Polliisivaltio, Klimax, and the Bastards 1982 *Kasset LP*—all cassette releases now on vinyl. Just when it seemed that the vaults had been scraped bare a few new entries turn up.

Abortti 13 are best known from their split EP with Pyhäkoulu. Apparently the band had written some fourteen songs and only recorded a few of them for the split back in 1983. Fast-forward to 2009 and two of the ex members put a new version of the band together and recorded those fourteen songs. I know this idea sounds somewhat preposterous, but the resultant *Viimeinen Verilöyly* EP is one of the best records I've heard in some time. Great raw thrashing Finnish hardcore the way it was done in 1983, but recorded last year. It must have been a blast for these 40-something punx to bash out the tunes from their '83 demo. Unlike a lot of *old* bands that reform, the sound is still raw and punk. Most *old* hardcore bands play a metallized version of how they thought they sounded back in the day, played through *better* amps with *professional* production. What those bands thought were technical limitations back in the day, such as primitive recording technology and shoddy gear, are essential elements of the sound and vibe of real hardcore. A sound it is very hard for today's scene to capture. Back to the music, if you love Finnish hardcore, check out Abortti 13's *new* 7" on Killer Records.

Next up, and most exciting is the Fight Records pressing of a long lost demo by Järjestyshäirio. This band was not known to me until this 7" dropped. The bands name means "disturbing the peace" and they recorded a demo in 1982. Apparently their singer was in an early line up of Kaaos, (which did not record), but was replaced on vocals by the late Jakke who switched from guitar. Fight records has done the world a great service by bringing us these ten blasts of pure 1980s Finnish hardcore power. The sound is raw and abrasive like Discharge or Varukers sped up and delivered with more anger. The primitive recording sounds perfect and the songs have all the hooks and verve that so much hardcore today lacks. I love the raspy vocals, the *hard* tone of the Finnish language probably makes it the best language for hardcore vocals. The guitar solos have that "recorded in a tin can and beamed in from Mars" sound that rings so true for all '80s hardcore. It's hard to put into print how *pumped* I get about this kind of hardcore, but at least I have this space in *MRR* to expound my zeal for this style and encourage others to check it out.

Not to overemphasize the early '80s, there have been some great current bands out of Finland. Kykloopien Sukuupuuto will be playing Chaos in Tejas this summer, their two 7"s, split 7" and LP are all worth checking out. Riistetyt have just released a new LP and will be touring the USA this spring as well. Kieltolaki is reported to be working on a new LP and Kylma Sotaa possibly have some new record coming out?

Some other 7"s you might have missed from Finland in the last year or so include:

Omaisuusvahinko's second EP *Sotaa Maailma Vastaan*: Good fast paced hardcore punk, feels tighter and more focused than their first 7", but that one is good too.

Pahaa Verta six song 7": There's been a long running cultural exchange between the Finnish and Brazillian hardcore scenes. I don't know if this band is directly influenced by '80s Brazilian hardcore, but their sound reminds me of a caustic mix of early '80s Brazilian and Finnish hardcore. Good raw (almost Oi punk) vocals over mid paced hardcore punk.

Yteiskunnan Ustavat's *Porojen Maa* EP: This band has been around for some years, but I didn't pay too much attention to them until recently. In fact I seem to remember thinking they were more of a grindcore or metal type band. Either I was wrong or they stepped it up, this is pure hardcore punk in the Finnish style.

Ydinaseeton Pohola s/t EP: This one is better to my ears than the split mentioned below. The songs are quick mid paced ragers and the vocals are harsh and desperate. I like the song structures and gritty guitar tone.

Kerripukki / Pahaa Verta split 7": Both bands play shredding fast hardcore. Kerripukki's vocals are sometimes a little too screeching for me, but the music is raging.

Ydinaseeton Pohjola/Kerikpukki split 7": I like the Kerripukki material on this EP much more. Driving raw hardcore that reminds me of early Wretched as interpreted by the Finns. Ydinaseeton Pohjola is more mid tempo on this release, and one song tastefully includes a keyboard. Their vocals are kind of unique, a sound that has turned some people off to the band. I however, back this band and their approach.

I find it perplexing, though perhaps refreshing, that these bands are probably only selling a few dozen of each of these EPs in the USA. With so many bands and fans caught up in hype and commercialism, it's good to see real hardcore being recorded for the sake of just releasing good hardcore and not so much importance placed on making it out side the home countries scene. That said, it's a shame to keep good hardcore under wraps. You have the chance to discover this music today instead of waiting 20 years for a reissue.

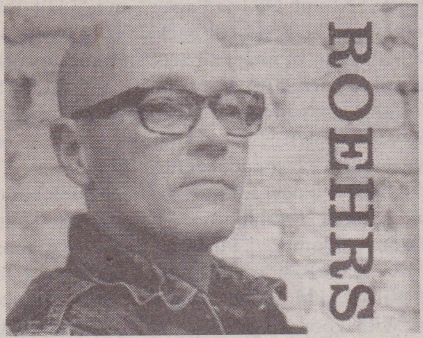
Kieltolaki probably have better chance of being known by US listeners with two 7"s on an American label. Both are excellent, and not too hard to find. They were recently interviewed in these pages as well.

Sotatila is another band that might be better known with some fairly well distributed 7"s and demo, in fact I will be doing the US press of this bands new 7" on my label.

Most of the bands mentioned above (as well

as some other bands which are now inactive) are featured on an excellent compilation LP *Propaganda Is Hippies*, which came out a few years ago and shouldn't be too hard to find.

Lastly, there's been a lot of discussion around *Razorcake*'s two-part expose of the Lumberjack Mordam Music Group debacle. I was critical of this deal when it went down, and I don't know what those labels were thinking who stayed on after Lumberjack bought Mordam, and it's even more of a head scratcher that they stayed after they found out how deeply involved Warner Entertainment was in the buyout. In the past I'd been critical of Mordam but mostly on aesthetic grounds. Although this distributor was a product of the DIY hardcore scene, their roster of labels was full of pop, ska, indie, emo and garage rock with some hardcore punk thrown in. Those bands labels might be nice people and have some integrity, but it's hard to take a lot of that stuff seriously coming from non-punks playing commercial sounding music, most of whom move to bigger labels and distributors as soon as they get the chance. Musical tastes aside, if you have spent any time in hardcore punk, you should have some kind of bullshit detector running in the back of your head. When one of the worlds largest media companies buys up an independent distributor, they can't have the best interests of your small underground label at heart. In fact, WEA probably bought Mordam just to put it out of business and absorb its most commercial labels into its own distribution network. Reading the interviews I didn't recognize most of the labels or bands mentioned. But I have to ask, you signed up with a subsidiary of WEA, what the fuck were you thinking? Did these labels actually believe that raking in chain stores and major label distribution was going to make their bands into the next Offspring or Nirvana? That worked out really well didn't it? I feel sorry for the people who got burned, but really you should have known better.



THEY DIVIDE

Fuck yes! Hardware Records from Germany has unleashed one of the toughest, hard-as-nails split EPs in recent memory! The split features two of the most ferocious hardcore bands on planet Earth! On side A you have BURIAL from Germany howling and punching their way through "Run." This song is fucking unbelievable! BURIAL attacks you with full battering-ram force. You get gruff vocals, searing metallic guitar leads and heavy as lead drum and bass. In "Run," BURIAL sings: "Run for your fucking life / Run until your feet bleed / Hope for the next day to come / Run with your herd and stick to it / Run! / But when the curtain falls, you will pray for your death / Pray!" Fuck!! This song destroys everything in your world! On side B you get ANTIMOB from Greece playing two killer songs that will continue the beating you received on side A! ANTIMOB is well qualified to occupy a split with the esteemed BURIAL. Both bands have come to shatter the thin sensibilities of all the safe little punks. This monstrous pair of hardcore dynamos will punish you fucks! BURIAL and ANTIMOB have taken on new strength as they ascend to the elite company of the gods of war! Get the split! Contact Hardware Records at www.hardwarerecords.com

Fuck! A blistering slab of hardcore appeared at *MRR* the other day! This fucking record devastates everything in its path! BOILING OVER from Illinois is responsible for this swath of destruction! The debut 7" by these hardcore hellions is called *Trash City*. BOILING OVER is fucking angry! The first cut is "Humanity is Fucked": "There is a growing contempt / A hate I can't control / All of you are dragging me down / You step all over me / Your greed is driving you." Very good! The music is raging hardcore—very fast at first, with a break that builds to a strong finish! The singing is fucking possessed by hatred and disgust! Read part of "American Dream:" "I have been raised in a place that has taught me how to live in a constant state of discontent… Here's to my fucking freedom / Here is to the land of opportunity / I am going to inherit a wasteland." Those are bleak observations by BOILING OVER. Song three is "I Live in Sin," and it goes like this: "You hide behind your golden crosses / You're placing your values on our world / We live by your rules / I have wasted nine years of my life to this shit / A man behind a pedestal shouldn't dictate how I act…" Fuck yes! There is palpable bitterness here! Side one finishes with "Anxiety Attack:" "I can't fight—I can't control it / Pressure is building up—Another day I'll be dead." Those are anxious words for you punks! Side two smashes you in the face with the title song "Trash City." This seething bucket of bile has powerful singing with superior guitar work. Some of the words are: "I'm stuck / I've been thrown in a ditch / I am choking / I am filled with waste and drowning in a sea of shit." These lyrics reflect a very desperate situation!! Song two on side two is "These Colors Don't Crust:" "This needs to change—we're on a path to destruction." This is a good song! Song three might be the most urgent song on the EP, "A War For Every Cause." The chugging guitar riff is fucking hypnotic! The words go: "Drug society and drug culture fixated on feeling a fix / Get me out of this culture, of this hell!! / The addiction won't stop / We're dragging our youth into this mess!" BOILING OVER writes intelligent songs about the ills we are facing in this society! Side two ends with "Cross It Off:" "We are destroying our history day by day / Tear it down—cross it off / Our past won't be remembered at all!" That is another fine hardcore message, delivered with authority with excellent drumming, guitar playing, bass and vocals!! Get this record! You will be impressed! Contact: Rev Distribution, PO Box 5232, Huntington Beach, CA 92615, www.revdistribution.com

Yes! SYNDROME from Richmond, Virginia has a snarling new EP for you fucks this month! This kick-ass release on Desolate Legacy Records is heavy-as-fuck! With Wolfboy on vocals, Alan on guitar, London on bass and the illustrious Mr. Brandon Ferrell on drums. This shit has deep, gruff vocals with scorching guitars and bombastic bass and drums. Side A starts with "Total Disarmament" and some of the lyrics are: "Years ago in darker times / Across the map they drew the lines / Nation versus nation went to war / Told us a flag's worth fighting for / Paid for with your blood and tears / Forcing us to live in fear." This is a thorough indictment of the masters of war that manipulate our children! Song two is "Walking Ghost" and it goes something like this: "Dying agony, burning flesh, fallout breeze, stench of death… / Crying screaming, going mad / Inferno fever from the rads." As you can tell from the first two tunes, this is not happy stuff. SYNDROME comes up with a rather pessimistic assessment of society today. Song three is called "God Junkie" with some scathing commentary: "Your god won't set me free / Got no time for this shit / God addicts on the street playing games with people's lives." SYNDROME is strongly opposed to organized religion! Side B of the SYNDROME EP is equally inspired. Rough vocals fleece out the stomping guitar, bass and drum combination. Side B begins with "Information Control." This song goes like this: "G-man spooks and databases / Black vans already waiting / No one safe from their eyes." Unfortunately this is not just punks being paranoid—it's true fact! SYNDROME finishes off the EP with "The Aftermath". This song has very dark lyrics that are most depressing—and valid: "Greed of nations / Mass starvation / Marching death / The reaper's breath." Fuck! There you have it! This record has disturbing lyrics and razor-sharp hardcore music to drive the point home! You need to hear this excellent H/C punk record! Contact SYNDROME c/o Desolate Legacy Records, PO Box 1681, Richmond, VA 23218.

The second screaming EP this month from Desolate Legacy Records is *Orwellian Future* by SSR. SEDITION SUB ROSA comes out with a full head of steam on the title track "Orwellian Future." This fucking song pins you to the front of the stage as the crowd surges forward for more! Some of the lyrics are: "World domination / State sponsored mind control / Coward fucking sheep that do exactly as they're told to / Billions ruled by a handful of elite that gives their orders from their thrones." George Orwell predicted this situation accurately! Song two is "Dark Days." The spot-on singing and the constant attack of the buzz-saw guitars render you helpless! "Dark Days" goes like this: "Nothing seems to go my way / Thoughts of joy now a total haze / It'll take more than time to escape this place / I can see no end to these dark days." Fuck! A song like "Dark Days" is the perfect soundtrack to slit your wrists by! Song three har-

nesses a twisted type of optimism: "Night just begun, my mind is a mess / Life is in shambles, brain is a wreck / No future / No hope / This is my lot / I live for these insane nights." Shit—at least you've got "Insane Night" to look forward to! Side B has two more songs that hit you like the cold kiss of a wet fist. SEDITION SUB ROSA begins with "Programming Centers." Read these lyrics: "Total brainwash right from the start / Conditioned thought, conditioned minds / Ensuring this generation stays just as blind / Uniform thought, uniform state." "Programming Centers" ties in nicely with the "Orwellian Future" title cut that SSR led off with. The last song on the EP is a distinct change of pace. The song "They Divide" ends the EP with the most powerful blow yet! This slow and menacing number makes your skin crawl! The anguished vocals call out the lament: "Poor white man is helpless / A poor black man's the same / Convinced their plight is from the other, they've fallen for their games / Only two divisions, those that have and those that don't / They make us hate each other, then run to them for help / We beg for scraps from their fucking feast, while they create our hell." Fuck yes! That is an amazing punk rock anthem!

Fuck! SOTATILA from Austria and Finland have a shockingly great eight song EP available for you punks and skins! For the uninitiated, SOTATILA has been delivering raw punk since 2005. SOTATILA sings in Finnish with explosive D-beat songs that draw on influences from early bands such as KAAOS, TERVEET KADET and TAMPERE SS. The new EP is called *Vituiks Meni* on Kamaset Levyt Records / Havoc Records / Plague Bearer Records. This music is played brutally fast. You don't get a chance to catch your breath between songs—this band slams you again and again!! SOTATILA is comprised of Jukkeli (vocals), Caro (guitar), Mundi (bass) and Yrjö (drums). This crew plays D-beat punk as if their lives depended on it!! Contact the band at: sotatila@gmx.et or www.punkinfinland.net/bands/sotatila

Holy crap! EXTORTION from the city of Perth in Western Australia has fired another fusillade in your direction! These crazed hardcore enthusiasts are carrying on in the tradition of SLAYER, NEGATIVE FX, POISON IDEA, NAPALM DEATH and NEGATIVE APPROACH. EXTORTION play furious thrash that connects them to the Australian Hardcore mania perpetrated by RUPTURE, TOE TO TOE and NAILED DOWN. EXTORTION is: Rohan on vocals, Brendan on guitar, Luke on bass and Stooks on drums. EXTORTION starts off this strong ten-inch slab with "Regrets." Behind the wound-up vocals are good lyrics: "I've told lies and I've told the truth / I've wasted time and wasted youth / All the things that I've done wrong now fill me with regret / I have trusted when I shouldn't have / I've cut off the helping hand / So much to give but I'm no use / Fucked up, stupid and confused / All the things that I've done wrong, I just can't forget." Yes sir—those are powerful lyrics that touch on the experiences that many people have lived through. In "Reality," EXTORTION sings about a shallow, self-serving individual: "Your judgments to me seem poor / You think that you can see it all / When filth you're buried underneath / You are so blind you can't see / Don't tell me what is real / It's all based on procedure / Act as if you're above it all / Wallowing in muck as you make that call / Get fucked." Yes! Those are some harsh words for that man! We storm right into "The Pessimist" with lyrics that illustrate how negativity breeds failure. Read this: "Wait for the end / Expect the worst / The pessimist has seen this all before / Seeing all the mistakes made and not making anymore / Pull apart what took so long to mend." Yes—those are not very happy thoughts! We blast through "Maze" and arrive at "Stare At The Sun:" "The answers have been staring back for so long under searing fact / Eyes burned black / Won't look away / Won't yield to fear / Living life with a mind burned clean." Those are great lyrics! This record has brutal fast parts that segue into slower, dangerous interludes. Side B yields more hardcore mayhem. We start with "Kill The Lights" with introspective lyrics such as "Kill the lights / I don't wanna see people chewed up by machine / Heads not made for being schooled / Never safe, not fitting in / Crushed inside of the machine / Chewed up, spat out / Body mangled, buried under / The casualties of an emotionless machine." Holy fuck! Those are disheartening lyrics. We plow through an energetic "Cheated" and come to a slower introduction on a tune called "Faulty Wiring". Then you get bludgeoned! Next is a ripper called "Degrade"—if you do not maintain the system, it will fail. This is delivered with deep garbled vocals, guaranteed to make you uncomfortable. EXTORTION play "Grind To A Halt" with a chugging slower groove to ensnare their victims and finish the record with rock and roll aplomb. This is good hardcore for you cretins!! Get your copy through Deep Six Records at: PO Box 6911, Burbank, CA 91510, www.deepsixrecords.com or from Resist Records at: PO Box 372, Newtown NSW, Australia 2042, www.resistrecords.com

Fuck yes! AGNOSTIC FRONT came to the Bay Area for a three-night stand in January! On Friday night, Mr. Miret, Mr. Stigma and company destroyed Thee Parkside club in San Francisco! After an introduction of some newer songs, AGNOSTIC FRONT proceeded to play the entire *Victim In Pain* record! This amazing hardcore opus has stood the test of time. *Victim In Pain* remains the best hardcore record ever made!! The punks and skins went absolutely crazy! After hearing this music for twenty-five years, this shit is as powerful as ever!! The crowd was also treated to songs from the *United Blood* EP. It was an incredible show! Read this set list: "Eliminator," "Dead To Me," "For My Family," "Friend Or Foe," "United Blood," "Discriminate Me," "Victim In Pain," "Remind Them," "Blind Justice," "Last Warning," "United and Strong," "Power," "Hiding Inside," "Fascist Attitudes," "Society Sucker," "Your Mistake," "With Time," "Gotta Go," "Take Me Back" and "Addiction." Fuck! That is as good as it gets for American Hardcore! You lucky fucks can purchase a handsome repackaged version of *Victim In Pain* and *United Blood* from Bridge Nine Hardcore Records. These new copies have a sturdy leatherette outer sleeve with the pictures from the original sleeves inside. Very nice! Get your copy from www.bridge9records.com

Yes sir! ACES & EIGHTS from Boise, Idaho have an excellent CD prepared for you! The new material is entitled *A Different Animal* and this shit rocks with a capital "R!" ACES & EIGHTS began playing back in 2002 with inspiration from early punk and Oi! like ROSE TATTOO, COCKSPARRER and MOTÖRHEAD. The *Different Animal* CD bristles with the rock and roll excitement similar to those legendary bands. We start off with "It Takes An Army." Read this: "It takes an army, it takes a million desperate souls to find one hundred warriors / It takes a lifetime to ask yourself the questions that you know you should really ask." This is great skinhead rock and roll in the tradition of the mighty ROSE TATTOO! The vocals are very strong with excellent guitar work! The bass playing and drumming help push the street-rock over the top! In "Poison Child," ACES & EIGHTS sing about drugs: "So when I say to you, it's the truth / Keep it there, over there / Don't want that bullshit in my life!" ACES & EIGHTS make their feeling about drugs quite clear! The songs are consistently strong. "Knives Come Out" is a particularly great number with a solid COCKSPARRER sound to it. Excellent! Read some of the words to "Knives Come Out:" "Your house of cards is falling / Corrupted through and through / Hey you sheep of the land / Look up to the wolves you worship / Licking their chops at you / Don't say one word you bastards / It's not a laughing matter." Excellent! The next song is "Death Before Dishonor:" "You think I'm gonna buy this shit? / It was an accident and his life just slipped away / Here lays a man who lost it all / In the end he couldn't bear to be alone / He chose death before dishonor." That is a good song! ACES & EIGHTS finish you off with "Daniel," "Tomb Of The Eagles" and "I Hit The Road (And The Road Hit Back)." This is a good CD with a lot of street smarts and strong rock and roll to back it up. Contact ACES & EIGHTS through Downtown Academy Records, www.downtown academy.com or www.myspace.com/aceseights

NOI!SE is a new four-piece street-punk band from Tacoma, Washington. Their recent demo includes "Blame," "Pushing On," "Reasons Why," "Walk Beside Us," "What Happened To The Kids?" and "War." This is melodic punk-rock with good sing-along choruses and tight harmonies. The tasteful guitar riffs and polished singing reminds one of older BAD RELIGION, not unlike the *How Could Hell Be Any Worse* era. Keep your eye on this band with an upcoming 7" EP to be released soon by Longshot Music and Contra Records! Two more bands from the Northwest that you need to be aware of are BRUTE SQUAD from Portland, Oregon and SHOT FOR SHOT from Seattle, Washington. If our luck holds, ACES & EIGHTS, NOI!SE, BRUTE SQUAD and SHOT FOR SHOT will share a four-way split in the not so distant future.

Until next month… See you fucks at the bar!

Bryony Beynon

GUEST COLUMN

1. British winters are a peculiar breed. The problem is usually their interminable average-ness. No deep freeze or breathtaking wind, just a slow procession of drizzle and grey-blue total cloud cover that today has the effect of making the high-rises across the road seem to blend into the sky. This year has been slightly more dramatic, yes, we've had a few inches of snow here and there, yes (of course) this was reported as a national "event," which would make most more snow-acclimatised countries laugh the tennis racquets off their feet. This being Britain, the "freak" weather came complete with, a few days into the "crisis," much tabloid-newspaper consternation that the distribution of grit for the roads and pavements was an income dependent post-code lottery. Of course they weren't inciting class war really, just having a futile moan, and as usual the sentiment melted faster than the icy stuff itself, leaving them to get back on with lambasting the usual cause of "Broken Britain"—Polish lesbian Black immigrants (possibly Jewish) that are hell bent on establishing Sharia Law and anally penetrating your kids. OK, that may have been a bit of a skim read, and yes, while I'm more than lucky to not share a country with Limbaugh et al, here we are in the company of cancerous journo-turds like *Daily Mail* columnist Richard Littlejohn, whose not-so-latent fascism still gets bought into way too much for my liking.

2. "So Tough! So Cute!" Right on rampage, no apologies.

Why does a band described thus make me so angry? It's not even for a gig, or a punk night, it's another of these increasingly derivative and weird fetishizations of the symbolism and referents of Riot Grrl for the purposes of a "themed" night at some aberration "oh-but-*everyone's*-going" deadbeat bar in East London. So when girl bands, supposedly taking queues from *Messthetics* and Delta 5 are sandwiched between DJs, and described happily as "So Tough! So Cute!" I can't help but make everything all awkward (damn me) and at least raise the question. Am I only heightening the awful otherness by wondering where the politics and self-criticism went? Doesn't it matter anymore? There are more and more girls in bands in London and it's more than exciting in a way, but seems everyone's got peculiar ambitions and certainly no one appears to want to challenge how they're represented and mediated as women, or as a band, no one is being ballsy or worried about what it means when, as I saw the other week, ten *helpful* boys rush the stage at the sound of a coy, "Oh gosh, how *do* you work this amp!? Tee hee!" Also, that familiar sort of ironic sing-song vocal delivery of that kind of bored-style talky disaffected stripped down lady punk was so powerful to me when I first heard it, precisely because of what they *were* saying, hidden in that seemingly dispassionate tone. The next step seems to have been to sing in a way that sure sounds like that, but make lyrics so happily content/context-void so as to neuter the whole shebang, Someone swapped a manifesto for guest list spots, now the most minor of all threats, made frilly enough to warrant a predatory "give us a twirl" from the soundman. Fuck.

Back in the summer we played a few gigs with Finally Punk. At one in particular moment I felt really weird and I couldn't put my finger on it apart from the one-way desire, from audience to stage, as the band, who seemed at one with each other in a really awesome psychic way, stripped off to just t-shirts and knickers and frolicked about. They are all classically beautiful, toned and American, a deadly trio for English boys natch, and it was warm, and the band clearly didn't give a fuck, of course, but the hope that they, well, that they might, if you catch my drift. Well it felt palpable in that sweaty room, in a way that unnerved me, and I'm not a prude by any stretch. I read this quote: "The idea of women empowering themselves by becoming sexual objects is backward. It seemed brilliant at one point, but it had really bad ramifications. Things lose their context so quickly." OK, it's Kim Gordon and there's a whole other kettle of fish right there, but my worry is just that bar room sexism finds its comfiest home when everyone, or even just a few people, think the job is somehow done because there's girls on stage. Still, thank god, for every wah-wah-lalala-content-bankrupt band like Pens, there is a band like CHAPS from Bristol. (I wish the ratio was actually that way, but you get my meaning—www.myspace.com/chapsforever)

A few months ago, we went to a gig (it always starts the same way). Some power pop bands played, some great ones, some not so great, some that made me question if this was really all that punk whilst having me tapping my toes so frenetically I forgot the question. After the set of one of the touring, female-fronted supports from the US, I found myself in conversation with some boy-friends, one ventured, still in a dream-like state, and the other quickly backed up, that there is just something "so damn hot" about a girl being in a band. After calling them creepy weirdos, I began to wonder about where this strange "hot" came from, if it was something to do with the woman being so precisely in the proverbial spotlight that the usually kind of covert sexualized gaze is given automatic space for the duration of the set at least, and that's maybe boner-enducing? At the same show, talking about this with a girl-friend of mine, she criticized the singer of said band for "playing right into their hands" by being sugary and "too inoffensive"—even just for being blonde! Now I peg that as kind of unhelpful. Personal politics shouldn't have to come into every musical expression, girl or boy. But then that made me think maybe the weird "hot" thing could be equally due to the fact that being in a band and making music is radical and super fun and that a person that does that and looks like she or he's having fun is attractive—aka maybe I should chill the fuck out.

There's surely no accounting for taste, but I've been trying to prove to some silly people that you can, in fact, sing in octaves and notes-that-must-be-hit and still be really fucking angry and maybe a bit politically articulate. Like, uh, haven't they heard the Shangri Las? X? Pfft. Trouble is, composure's one thing in theory, but the self-actualizing agency of simply holding a microphone is all too often mitigated by the all-too-real fear that you can see my arse crack, or that I probably am too big for this t-shirt and these lights aren't flattering or that I look a stupid heifer. (Sure, I talk of manifestos, yet this shit doesn't stop mattering, somehow.) So recently when we played (with a one-off reunited Zounds, ferchrissakes) the other day, I was *so* pumped for it, and then a legion of unbelievably moronic street punk types were being grope-y bad bastards the whole way through our set, making shit comments, trying to grab my boobs, getting their dicks out even. I wanted to make a point, be *funny* to diffuse how horrible I felt, some polemic, some kind of neat rebuttal to the butt display, because, well, no one else was responding, but instead I just kept mumbling, "Fucking punks don't get it" and huffing. Eventually I did slap one of them who made more of move to my boobs than I was prepared to accept, which was weird because I've never done that before, and I don't know if ineffectual violence towards a cider-faced teenage stage penis who was literally almost unconscious-wasted really did much to advance the cause, but needs must. Of course they goofed about during the other bands sets, but in very different ways. I kind of wish they'd gone for the singer of Violent Arrest, because that dude would have definitely done better than my pissy slap.

Ultimately, every stage is a fucking minefield and, apart from in cases like that, it's not always anyone in this room's fault. Still, while we continue to stand in this proverbial room, it's got to be our responsibility to at least recognize, if not engage with all this stuff in some way, no? Am I going mental? Wah. Clearly I'm working through these ideas as they slap me about the face, not with much in the way of any deeper tools than my own experiences, and maybe it shows, so, ugh, sorry.

3. Threeearworms.

My friend Lenny took me to the Hunterian Museum at the Royal College of Surgeons today, which is a massive collection of so many different biological oddities—both human and animal. Pickled walrus tumor, distended sheep's gut, gigantism sufferer's skeletons, otter and lizard-face biopsies and more pickled fetuses than you could shake one of their massively brutal seventeenth century forceps at. There was almost definitely some kind of pickled, ear-eating worm type monster, too. What I'm saying is, I forgot to have lunch before hand and very nearly brought back my coffee on coming across

a frog preserved at the moment of tadpole dispatch from weird little chambers in its stomach. *Rank.* I work as a visitor host at the British Museum, which is a more general (and deeply problematic in too many ways to go into here) "treasures of colonialism" type affair, I just look at mummified stuff all day, and am now eternally glad that there's little chance of me coming across anything quite as gruesome as the hairpin in the spleen I saw today. Egads. Anyway, earworms, the other meaning.

This month has featured a more than usual repeated bashing of "Securicor" by Crass just for the best use of dog breed names in punk, and because it reminds me of Ralph Simmond's two high-concept "name-only" bands, a queercore darkwave two piece called Penetrating Gaze (ho ho) and primitive d beat noise in the form of ... Pissed Alsatian. If anyone can think of anymore dog songs beyond that Shellac record called *Excellent Italian Greyhound*, then email me—I'd like to make a tape. I'm also obsessed with "Beer Can Beach" by Surf Punks, completely ridiculous sparse bass-led, like a jokier more-beach-based Devo dealing mostly with Californian beach turf wars it seems? I'm no expert, but the area of South Wales I grew up in had a similar thing, except everyone just pretended to be a *Surfie* and never went near the sea because it's fucking freezing. *My Beach* is great as a novelty LP, but bro has definitely got sand in his bloody mouth organ. Uncalled for. Either way, I cannot wait for summer to blast this on one side of a tape and Simpletones on the other. Thirdly, Italian band, Chain Reaction for the song "Bloody Ways." The vocals sound like he's being flayed and kind of somehow liking it in a dirty way, it's hyper-speed fast, easy on the production values and heavy on the accent, so great, tuneful and ballsy. Also, Hi—totally not metal, unlike everyone else in 1985. The rest of the EP (Gabiie on Belfagor Records) has songs titled stuff like "Your Bloody War" and "Personal Autodistruzione" so make an informed choice there. I'm listening to this and reading Paulo Virno, and it *works*, ho ho. If you can get me a copy of this, the email is there for a reason.

4. We finally, after what, six releases, started maintaining a proper internet presence, so people can actually buy our records should they choose to, and whatever guff we've traded for. I nearly tore my own hands off trying to make it look not shit and then gave up but nevertheless, Dire Records has embraced the future. Where's my jetpack? (If you want to look or maybe get a Sceptres record—fuck off, I know—then god willing it should still be there—www.direrecords.com)

5. Garbled, but eh. So. Deleted from the internet...kind of. Something about planning actions not results and taking advice from semi-strangers. That email-only seems like puritanical cold turkey is weird, but probably good. Regaining some semblance of inner life and trying to undo this constant partial attention we've had bred into us. I've swapped it for reading Walter Benjamin under the duvet (the night before the seminar, of course) and that phrase "I contain multitudes" loops on my frozen cycle ride as a hopeful kind of metronome. It's only nine miles across the city, but it feels like an adventure. I wait in library until its dark—four p.m.—mainly just for the way the high rises look across the river, impotent as every other financial capital now, but London still floors me when least expected. Home and wheezing. Dusty as hell and the glue has dried up to nothing, but I found the first LP ever bought. Played each side five times. Maybe back to the start or maybe reborn, today it's impossible to tell, but for an accidental stuck groove mantra—You can't be what you were, so you better start living the life that you're talking about.

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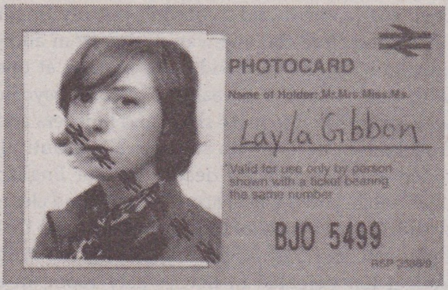

Thee olde toppe tenne! Cut in half, bargain bin stylee.

1-The mysterious NZ comp 12" that Graham Booth tantalized my ears and brains with, it came out sometime in 1980/1981, featured mostly girl punk bands, had weird blue, kind of psychedelic cover that sort of resembled a '70s curtain more than a black light painting if ya know what I'm saying. At any rate I didn't bother to write anything down—band names, who needs em. I had an idea of the comp title and record label, and assumed I could use the power of the computer search tools available in modern life to find out more. How wrong I was! There is nothin' anywhere about this artifact, the search led me to the absolutely insane and amazingcore *Y2K Axemen* blog. The maniac New Zealand band have provided a most excellent resource and time suck rabbit hole of doom, theaxemen.wordpress.com, into which I suggest you throw yourself if you are interested in downloading tapes of pre-Shoes This High bands, looking at eye damaging art and finding out which over the counter medicines have psychedelic properties. In short if you need to know about New Zealand punk weirdos and the things they conceived of during the '80s through 'til now, that place is a good starting point. I am being purposely vague here, but if anyone knows what I am talking about in regards to this record and can tape it for me, we would be friends for life. No lie.

2-"Peer Pressure was a Santa Cruz band (1980-1981) involving Kathy McVey, Rosemary Gilman and Patricia Gleseke. Kathy and Rosemary had sat in on some Waybacks shows and then decided to start their own band. They were "driving along and there was this girl standing there at the stoplight with drumsticks in her pocket, and we go 'Hey, you wanna be in a band?'" The girl was Patricia. John Peel played their song "I'm Adult" so often on his radio show that they received fan mail from England." It sounds like a less rock Bush Tetras, it's much more shambolic (and thus punker), but with that similar band idea. At any rate of course I couldn't find much more info about them, beyond an aging Santa Cruz punk Facebook page. I like the idea of the band forming out of some version of the punk nod, one adapted for punk girls...

3-I was going to go see Chain and the Gang, Ian Svenonius' new band, which I have yet to hear, but alas the excursion was not possible. I have been listening to a lot of tapes recently, as I have a Walkman rather than an iPod, (due to bank balance deficiencies rather than luddite tendencies) and I've been listening to these Nation of Ulysses tapes I got in the dollar bin at Amoeba. I was obsessed with NOU as a kid, and only didn't go see them play because I was grounded when they played London. The Cupid Car Club 7" is pretty perfect too, but not so much his later stuff. Walking to work listening to NOU makes me want to form a band, a secret society. I have been attempting to get rid of some of the ephemera I carry around with me, the epic piles of fanzines and fliers and magazines that clutter my room and become the bane of my life when I have to move... The gas station jacket, probably last worn in '95, complete with mottled Heroin patch? Do I need this artifact? Sassiest Boy in America? Nostalgia will sink us all.

4-The Plugz-"Mindless Contentment." The punk song that gets stuck in my head the most is GG Allin's "1980s RocknRoll." This is not the best thing that has ever happened to me. I also get these classic numbers rattling around my thoughts on a way too frequent basis: "You're so Stark / Raving normal" and also, "No hope for you / No hope for anyone / No hope for the wretched." If you don't know the words to these things and they do not reverberate around your skull like an endless woeful infomercial, consider yourself blessed. This month however I have had the Plugz in my brains, which is quite pleasant. Mindless Contentment!

5-Nu Sensae live. Holy shit. People mentioned Godheadsilo, which also happened when XYX played. Bass and drums? Reasonably heavy? Pigeon holed! The singer/bassist was sort of reminiscent of Linda Manz in *Out of the Blue.* The drummer's style is transformative, and made me think of listening to *Is This My World?* It's not sludge, it's not no wave, it's not AmRep, nor KRS, but just heavy interesting music played well with an incredible female vocalist.

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So last month we ran an interview with a member of a Christian band, which prompted many intense conversations around here regarding Christianity, punk, and the combination of

religion and punk, and, really, no one got anywhere. There are two stereotypical responses in the punk world that I have seen in regards to religion. Religion sucks, religion is evil, it's man made, it shows some sort of weakness, it oppresses people, Jesus is the same as the Easter Bunny, etc. The other response: Who cares? That shit is beneath me—let's get fucked up. I can't say that I agree with either side completely, but I do understand the reluctance to engage in the subject any more that that, because beginning to examine any type of religious tradition, opens up a Pandora's Box; it's a lot more complicated than it seems. It's my opinion that punks generally oversimplify religious traditions (like some of the columnists in this magazine have illustrated all too well). I think most punks in the US forget that as adults, we have a choice and that for many, religion is something that is intertwined with our upbringing, our politics and our culture, all in varying degrees and all within different levels of intersectionality.

It seems that a number of punks have had extremely negative experiences in their upbringing regarding religion causing an understandable aversion to engaging with any dialogue about it. If there is any sort of discussion, most of it is anecdotal with very little factual knowledge. Religion and spirituality are very personal, without the negative or positive experiences attached, there would be fewer disputes, but I am a firm believer in knowing what it is you are standing against. Punks that are huge combatants of religion should probably know what they are talking about. That is not to say that none of us do, but if we are so strong in our beliefs, what are we afraid of? Is knowledge about religious traditions a drug? Are you afraid of becoming a believer?

We have all had experiences with religion in both negative and positive ways. I know the positive experiences are arguable within punk subculture depending on your point of view and where you come from. Punks are willing to listen to the negative stories because it serves their purpose much more, but any success stories that a person may have are dismissed as being delusional or ignorant. How can you argue with someone that is happy and doing no real harm? Even helping their community? I guess that is an opinion that I formed in the distinction between big "R" religion and little "r" religion.

Institutional religions have a pretty bad track record, but the way they are lived out on the street is for the most part very different, and tends to help the person involved. This might sound nuts, but just think about it (Check out: *Women as Ritual Experts* by Sered, and *Women in Ochre Robes* by Khandelwal). Also, that type of attitude can easily lend itself to racism and the ethnocentrism that has been a justification in "helping" the "natives" for hundreds of years.

For me, punk is about rejection of what society is telling you is right or wrong. We hate religion, right? Religion is evil? We are the good guys fighting against the oppression of religion, right? Not that I am an Ayn Rand quoting subjectivist (gross), but it's pretty funny to think that this anti religious stance is mimicking what is being fought against. This dichotomous relationship with religion and punk mimics the dichotomous relationship between good and evil. The way I see it, if you are going to reject "Religion" then you should be actively trying to abandon the residual sexism, classism, racism that goes along with it, but we all know that this is not the case. I have heard punks that hate religion and disdain God, punks that write scathing songs protesting the bloodshed of religious wars, who will in the same breath call people faggots, try to convince me that Skrewdriver is cool, or talk down to women. Then they'll tell me that it's "Just the way we talk, where I come from," Gimmie a fucking break. Grow up…

Another thing to consider is that sometimes religion is so intertwined with a culture that it's inextricable to our experiences. Like I said before, there is a distinction between "R"eligion and "r"eligion, meaning that what we see and hear on the news, is not always what's happening on the ground. In countries where punk is thriving, like Mexico, punks see direct impact from the presence of a religious tradition that affects their everyday lives in an invasive way, (like overturned pro-choice fertility legislation in Mexico City due to the threat of ex-communication from the Catholic church. I suspect the recent legalization of gay marriage in Mexico City will fall victim to this as well). Lots of these punks still go through the religious rites of passage that have *more* meaning than their obvious religious overtones. To put it plainly, religion is the source of many conflicts, but also the source of many events that promote community in smaller levels of expression. To paraphrase *Holy Terrors: Thinking About Religion after September 11* by Bruce Lincoln, most of the countries in the world are "maximalist." This means that religion, whether you like it or not, is the central domain of the culture, involving ethical and physical practice. It is the stabilizer of culture; religious leaders are the ones who maintain the ongoing order and "minimalist" countries are seen as intrusive and power hungry.

Here in the US, we are in the minority in that we are a culture that promotes the choice to engage in religious activity or not—we are a religiously "minimalist" country. Our economy drives our society and religious/metaphysical concerns are restricted to the private sphere. The market dictates our cultural preferences, we view societies with religious ties as either archaic yet quaint, or a threat that is justifiably subject to attack. Sound familiar? So what does this mean for punks from different places? From the nature of the level of unavoidable interaction with religion within their societies, maybe we could learn something from the way they deal with it. With all that said, whether you like it or not, Religion is part of our culture. It is. Expressions of religious tradition in this country are mostly "minimalist," but their influence is ever present and seems to be harnessing the power of capitalism in its quest to be "maximalist."

What does that mean for us as punks? It means Christian "punk." While I consider myself a tolerant person, I in no way support Christian punk in any way shape or form. Christian "punk" is not punk. I know that is a pretty strong claim and there will be arguments about the music (if it looks like a duck and walks like a duck…), but that shit is not punk by the very nature of its being. Don't be fooled; the New Testament (pick a gospel, any gospel!) distinctly makes proselytizing part of the Christian mission. In the culture of most dominant Protestant sects, embracing technology and language is encouraged in their quest to "save souls."

The art and lyrics of the aforementioned band remind me of George W. Bush speeches in which New Testament allusions are made, but are understood differently among Christians and non-Christians (check out JP McDaniel PhD. *Figures of Evil: A Triad of Rhetorical Strategies for Theo-Politics* and Smith and Hopson PhD. *Changing Fortunes*). I know, I know… this sounds awfully conspiracy theorist of me, but I think Christian bands are playing their secular punk fans for chumps. They are banking on your ignorance of their religion. I am not using the band's name to illustrate a point. You may not be Christian, but let me tell you that numbers count and the more people they have at their shows, the more powerful they look and feel. Visibility and exposure in areas that are not necessarily their domain over time normalizes particular behavior and ideas; you are tacitly supporting their mission. A big point of contention in conversations about the interview with the singer of this Christian band was that he seemed to have some good, well thought out ideas. Never underestimate the intelligence of a religious person—these ideas have been developing over thousands of years, evolving and responding to the world around them. No one does this more effectively than Protestants. Many people belonging to a religious tradition study their texts, and know where to refer to in order to answer difficult questions posed to them by secular people. Underestimating this is an example of a failure of your intelligence, not theirs. The aforementioned interview subject asserts that the bible does not say that homosexuality is wrong (which is true), and that he is prochoice, so it was argued that he must be somewhat open minded. If you kept reading, his correlation between crack and abortion is comical and intrinsically racist (yes, it can be both). Basing a persons "open mindedness" on answers that you find correct and ignoring weird correlations or ambiguities is, again, a failure of any discerning intelligence.

My intention here is not to sound like an all-knowing pretentious asshole, but to point out that there is an ulterior motive here. There have been some embarrassing liaisons between punk and religion, like the Krishna punk movement that folded in on itself, but there have also been some great examples of punks questioning the role of traditions within their culture by way of music, like the Taqwacore kids. Ultimately, punk is about having no limitations to your means of questioning. If you choose to adhere to a worldview that intrinsically limits you, then it's not punk. From the first letter from this guy on his work stationary, asserting his intelligence to the seemingly well-rounded answers in the interview, pointing out his "outsider" status and his smug style of confrontation, there is a motive here and I would bet that it is not in your best interest, but his.

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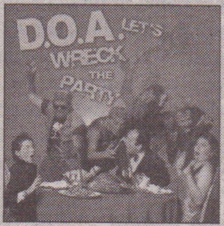

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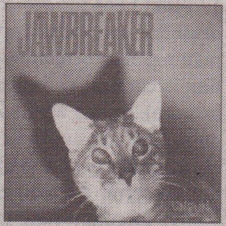

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Y'KNOW - ONE OF THE FEW SILVER LININGS OF THAT WHOLE TIPPER GORE INSPIRED OBSCENITY BUST ON THE DEAD KENNEDYS WHERE I GOT DRAGGED INTO COURT FOR THE FRANKENCHRIST ALBUM & THE ARTWORK INSIDE IT - (BUST IN '86 - TRIAL IN '87) - WAS - #1 - WELL SUDDENLY I WASN'T READING MY ALLEGED POETRY IN LITTLE COFFEE HOUSES ANYMORE & MY SPOKEN WORD THING GOT POLE-VAULTED INTO UNIVERSITIES - THEY STARTED HIRING ME AS A SO-CALLED LECTURER ON CENSORSHIP & I REALIZED I HAD ANOTHER GIFT BESIDES SINGING IN BANDS & THAT IT MIGHT BE A GOOD IDEA TO USE MY INTERESTS IN WEIRD-ASS HUMOR ON POLITICAL MATTERS TO SEE IF I COULD INFLUENCE HISTORY IN SOME TINY LITTLE WAY WHICH I THINK I HAVE BUT THE OTHER SILVER LININGS WERE GETTING TO MEET & SPEND SOME TIME WITH FRANK ZAPPA - THE FIRST TIME I WENT TO HIS HOUSE HE SAT ME DOWN & SHOWED ME A CHRISTIAN AEROBICS VIDEO WHERE OF COURSE THE BUSTIEST WOMAN WAS RIGHT UP FRONT LIKE THE PROW OF A SHIP & THEY'RE ALL GOING "1-2, 2-2, 3-2, PRAISE THE LORD! 1-2, 3-2, ETC" - & I ALSO GOT TO CROSS PATHS & SPEND SOME TIME WITH H.R. GIGER WHOSE ARTWORK INSPIRED THE L.A.P.D. TO GO 450 MILES OUT OF THEIR JURISDICTION TO TRASH MY HOUSE & THEN RAID IT - LOOKING FOR "HARMFUL MATTER" IN THE CAT BOX - SO GIGER'S AGENT IN NYC - LES BARANY - CONTACTED ME & IT WAS AGREED EARLY ON THAT GIGER SHOULD NOT BE BROUGHT IN FROM SWITZERLAND TO TESTIFY AT THE TRIAL - THE GUY WHO PLAYED "BAD COP" IN THE RAID ON MY HOUSE WAS VERY INTERESTED IN TRACKING DOWN GIGER TO ARREST HIM & HE GOT SO ANGRY WITH ME WHEN I SAID HE WAS IN SWITZERLAND! I WAS AFRAID HE WAS GOING TO DO THE RODNEY KING ON ME RIGHT IN MY OWN LIVING ROOM ☆→

☆ - I FINALLY GOT TO MEET GIGER WHEN HE HAD AN EXHIBIT ON THE UPPER EAST SIDE - NYC - AT SOME SCHMANTZY GALLERY RUN BY A MISERABLE UPTIGHT GUY - SO WHEN I GOT THERE ALL HELL WAS BREAKING LOOSE (THE SITUATION CONTINUED TO COMBATIVELY DISINTEGRATE UNTIL) - A SHOUTING MATCH ENSUED & WHO SHOULD WALK IN JUST THEN BUT GWAR - IN FULL COSTUME - AT WHICH POINT THE GALLERY OWNER FLED - GIGER WAS SO GLAD TO SEE GWAR! - THIS WAS MAYBE THE EARLY 90's - I NOTICE THAT NO MATTER WHAT FLASHLIGHT I PUT IN MY CAR THE BATTERY ALWAYS GOES DEAD - BUT IF ITS SOMEBODY ELSE'S IT NEVER GOES DEAD! - TALK ABOUT CONSPIRACIES MAN!

Jello Biafra - 06/03/2K9 - Emeryville CA - Alternative Tentacles HQ I met Jello at a Star Fucking Hipsters show at Gilman last March - & thanks to Sturgeon & Jesse he agreed to be a PEOPs! - Jello is a punk icon of course so I don't have to tell you about his history altho i can mention that he currently has a new band - since 2K8 - Jello Biafra and the Guantanamo School of Medicine and they will be touring heavily for the next year in Europe, South America, and the USA - & i can also mention that i think i first heard of the Dead Kennedys in the late '70s or maybe it was 1980? - I was a geeky teenager & loved punk but I had no punk friends at all - i heard some news report about this horrible band who were a terrible influence & they were inciting riotious behavior - so i went straight to the record store - I actually sort of snuck there so i would not get beat up & very shyly asked the guy for Dead Kennedys - the artwork & the music were pretty intense for me at the time & twisted my brain in all the right directions - thnks Jello! - of course you can find Jello thru alternativetentacles.com - to contact Fly email: fly@peops.org - or - fly@bway.net (put MRR in the subject so I know its not spam) - or check PEOPS.ORG - for snail mail - Fly PO Box 1318 Cooper Stn NYC NY 10276 USA - for zines go to microcosmpublishing.com - new PEOPs #5 should be out NOW!!

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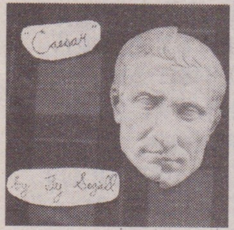

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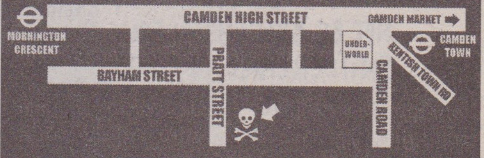

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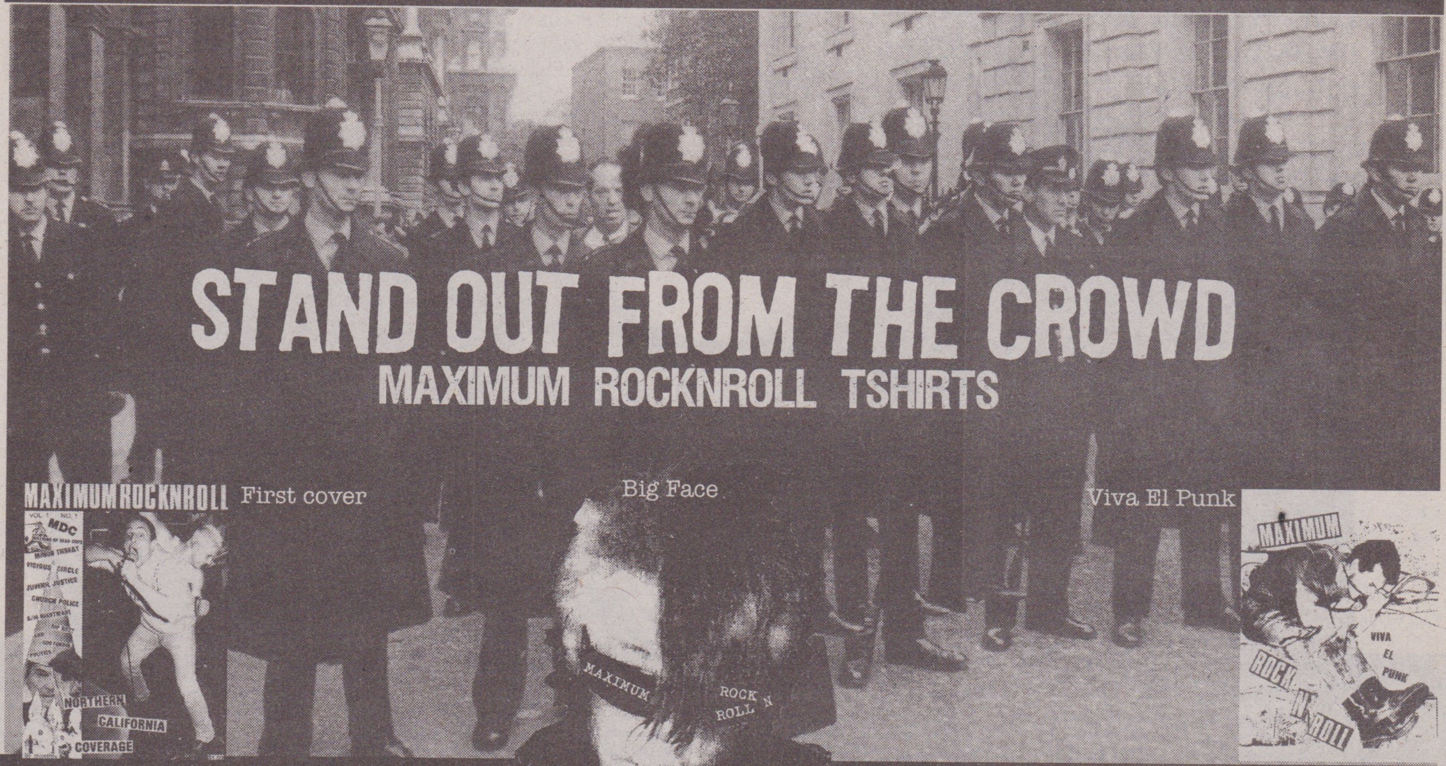

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BLACKWATER'S GUNRUNNERS

By Daniel Schulman from *Mother Jones*

Blackwater improperly obtained hundreds of weapons intended for use by Afghanistan's already underequipped police force—and then falsely claimed to a Senate committee that the firearms had been returned when many remained unaccounted for.

According to a months-long investigation by the Senate Armed Services Committee that unearthed a range of misconduct by the company's personnel, contractors working for a Blackwater subsidiary named Paravant operated recklessly and routinely violated military regulations. The inquiry also identified a series of major vetting lapses by the company, which employed at least one contractor it had previously fired for improper behavior in Iraq and others who abused alcohol and drugs, including steroids. The investigation paints a grim picture of the state of contracting oversight in Afghanistan, where, according to committee staffers, military officials missed multiple red flags calling Paravant's conduct into question—and were even confused about who was ultimately responsible for overseeing the company's work in the first place.

On Wednesday the committee will hold a hearing on Paravant, which, in the fall of 2008 inked a subcontract with Raytheon to train Afghan National Army troops. The work, worth about $20 million over two years, was carried out under a 10-year, $11.2 billion contract known as Warfighter FOCUS. Paravant, one of numerous subsidiaries incorporated by Blackwater founder Erik Prince, was created solely for the purposes of this subcontract. According to Brian McCracken, a former Paravant vice president who now works for Raytheon, Blackwater and Paravant were "one and the same." He said the subsidiary was created to avoid the "baggage" of Blackwater's scandal-tainted brand.

The committee, chaired by Sen. Carl Levin (D-Mich.), first began investigating Paravant last summer, following an episode on May 5 when off-duty Paravant trainers opened fire on an oncoming car, killing two Afghan civilians and wounding a third. Similar to fallout after Blackwater operators gunned down civilians in Baghdad's Nisour Square, the episode outraged Afghans and, according to the Justice Department, "caused diplomatic difficulties" for State Department officials in Afghanistan.

In January, two of the contractors, Justin Cannon and Christopher Drotleff, were indicted on second-degree murder and firearms violations. (They maintain that they fired in self-defense.) Blackwater moved quickly to fire the pair, saying they had violated the company's policy prohibiting the consumption of alcohol. But Daniel Callahan, who initially represented the contractors, contends that the men were scapegoated. He claims Blackwater concocted the drinking charge as a pretext to fire them. What Blackwater wanted to cover up, he says, was that Cannon, Drotleff, and their Paravant colleagues were issued weapons they were unauthorized to carry. (A spokeswoman for Xe, as Blackwater is now known, did not respond to a request for comment.)

The information obtained by the committee, which combed through thousands of documents and conducted dozens of interviews, confirms widespread use of unauthorized weapons by Blackwater and Paravant personnel. And, say committee staffers, the shooting episode involving Cannon and Drotleff was not the first to involve Paravant contractors.

Five months earlier, in December 2008, a Paravant training team got the "wild idea" to take target practice from a speeding vehicle, according to the firm's former program manager, Johnnie Walker. The team's leader, Russell Cannon, mounted the car carrying an AK-47 and decided to "ride it like a stagecoach," Walker told the committee. When the vehicle hit a bump, Cannon's weapon discharged, striking a colleague in the head and seriously wounding him.

"The reckless disregard for weapons safety is particularly striking given that he and his team were hired for the specific purpose of teaching the Afghan National Army how to safely use their weapons," said Levin in a prepared statement.

The shooting was reported by Raytheon to the Army's Program Executive Office for Simulation, Training, and Instrumentation (PEO STRI), the military division overseeing the training contract. Yet, committee staffers say, PEO STRI officials took no steps to investigate the incident—and were unaware they had even received the report until Levin's investigators confronted them with it in October. "If the shooting had been investigated, PEO STRI would have seen that Paravant personnel were using weapons improperly and unsafely, with inadequate supervision, and that they were carrying weapons they were not supposed to have," said Levin. "If corrective action had been taken in December, the May 2009 shooting could have been avoided."

This was just one of a series of oversight lapses by military officials, who also told the committee of routinely seeing Paravant contractors in possession of weapons but never checking to see if they had the requisite approval to carry them. Meanwhile, Blackwater and Paravant personnel were apparently well aware they were violating regulations. In November 2008, for instance, Blackwater's country manager for Afghanistan, Ricky Chambers, requested Paravant personnel return the weapons they'd been issued. The reason? According to documents reviewed by the committee, the company was "expecting an investigation into Blackwater accountability in Iraq resulting from a lawsuit, and fear[ed] it will impact Blackwater accountability procedures in Afghanistan." Chambers later recommended against approaching the colonel in charge of training the Afghan security forces to receive formal approval to use weapons authorized under a separate contract. The official, Chambers said, "may ask too many questions."

Chambers, who declined to be interviewed by the committee, citing his 5th Amendment right against self-incrimination, eventually suggested Paravant contractors obtain weapons at a US-operated weapons depot outside of Kabul. Known as Bunker 22, the facility houses weapons and ammunition for the exclusive use of the Afghan National Police. According to the committee, Blackwater had previously acquired more than 500 AK-47s and other weapons from the facility, using them to arm contractors working for a variety of Blackwater-connected firms. The company was able to acquire the weapons via an inside connection with an official, Chief Warrant Officer Greg Sailer, who

worked at the facility. Sailer was a one-time Navy colleague of Blackwater's then-armorer, JD Stratton. On multiple occasions, Sailer facilitated the handover of hundreds of weapons to Stratton and other Blackwater contractors—in at least two cases, without any paper trail documenting the transfer. In another case, when Sailer conveyed more than 200 AK-47s to Blackwater, the contractor who took custody of them signed them out under the name "Eric Cartman" or "Carjman"—an apparent reference to the South Park character. (A Blackwater lawyer told the committee that the company had never employed an individual by either name.)

Since June, Blackwater has claimed at least twice that the weapons had been returned to Bunker 22. As recently as February 20, Blackwater told the committee that the company had "return[ed] all Bunker 22 firearms that had been issued to Paravant personnel."

But, said Levin, "records obtained by the Committee prove the company's statements to be false." He added, "these are weapons that belonged to the Afghan National Police—not Blackwater. And it is only on the eve of this hearing that the company is giving the majority of them back to the Afghan government." (This is not the first time Blackwater has been accused of possessing weapons it wasn't supposed to have. In the past, the company has come under investigation [7] for illegally smuggling assault weapons and silencers into Iraq.)

It's bad enough that Blackwater improperly obtained hundreds of weapons intended for the Afghan police, committee staffers say. Worse still, Paravant distributed them to a crew of poorly vetted contractors who should never have been carrying them at all. Records released in connection with the prosecution of Cannon and Drotleff indicate that both had records of misconduct and violent behavior. And the backgrounds of other Paravant recruits were equally checkered.

Take Sebastian Kucharski, an assistant team leader for Paravant who had previously been fired by Blackwater in Iraq following an alcohol-fueled altercation. Kucharski's name, say committee staffers, even appeared on Blackwater's internal "Do Not Hire" list. Yet Blackwater brought him back on—only to fire him again last May after he got into another fight, this time with military personnel. Then there's Karl Newman, a Paravant team leader, who was booted from the contract by the army after he attempted to "pull rank on a US Army Lieutenant." Paravant's ex-project manager, the aptly named Johnnie Walker, was let go after repeatedly violating the company's no-drinking policy. The committee's investigators found that other Paravant personnel were terminated for alcohol and drug use, including one contractor who was found in possession of steroids and hypodermic needles.

Committee staffers say Blackwater also took a cavalier approach to the supervision of its contractors. Following the shooting last May, Raytheon sent a written warning to Paravant for failing to exercise "sufficient command, control and oversight of its personnel." Paravant responded: "If [Raytheon] believes that Paravant needs to supervise all sucontractor personnel at all times... Paravant will need to submit a request for equitable adjustment for the additional personnel, security, and other costs of providing such '24-7' supervision throughout Afghanistan." In effect, say committee staff, Blackwater was seeking additional compensation for a duty it was already contractually obligated to perform—and in the process shirking responsibility for the actions of its personnel.

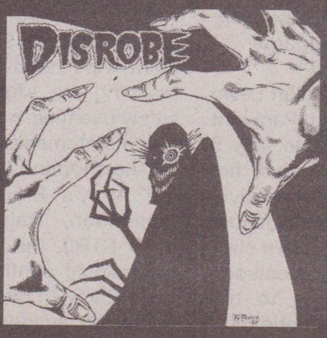
Oversight lapses in Afghanistan and Iraq have been well documented. And, according to a recent report by the Congressional Research Service, the actions of contractors—and those of Blackwater personnel in particular—have potentially undermined US foreign policy goals in both theaters. As Levin pointed out, "Even one irresponsible act by contractor personnel can hurt the mission and put our troops in harm's way."

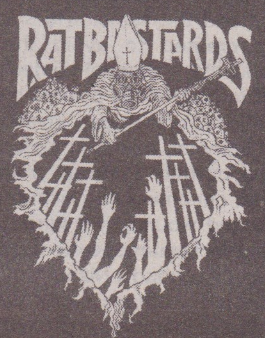
Source URL: http://motherjones.com/politics/2010/02/blackwater-paravant-unauthorized-weapons-afghanistan-levin

RIP DERRICK "RICK" PONCE

On February 9, 2010 Derrick Ponce, Chicago musician, artist and a great friend succumbed to cancer. He was born on June 10, 1969, the son of legendary jazz musician, Tommy Ponce, and jazz vocalist, Linda (Holmes, Ponce) Dellorto. Always humble, Rick was not only one of the most kind-hearted, generous, laid back, and funny punks in Chicago, he was also an amazing guitarist. I know that is often said about many people, but ask anyone, literally anyone, who has witnessed him play and they will tell you that he was a shredder with finesse, style and a love for playing that can be matched by no other, which near the end, is what he missed most. He was in tons of punk bands over the span of his life (Disrobe, Rat Bastards, Fleabag, Uncle Brown Eye, Subjugated, District 13, Mob Action, Generation Excrement, Ufgc, Bottles Flyin', Snoopeez Tapeworm, to name a few) as well as several metal bands and a few jazz and blues groups.

Rick was also a great artist, winning awards for some of his artwork and created countless illustrations for record covers, shirts and band merch. He was a pretty quiet guy, but could expound on the history of classic martial arts, horror and sci-fi movies, or dork on for hours about music with out any hint of pretension. With intelligence and his great sense of humor, Rick had no problem expressing his extreme left views while still having a beer, a smoke, and a kind word for anyone he met. With the help of his family, Rick fought hard against the disease, went through all the treatments, and changed what ever he could to battle his illness. Chicago lost a great friend, a legendary punk and when he said "I'm all about the HARDCORE-PUNK scene and the DIY ethics, and will be for life," he meant it and showed it everyday. We are all sad that he is gone, but happy that he is no longer in pain. I guess this is one of the few times that I really hope that there is a place that we go after we die because, as stated by Useless Wooden Toys in their farewell to Rick, "Wherever mad thrashers go, it's gotta be that much radder!" We love you Rick and we miss you.





IN UTAH MISCARRIAGE=CRIMINAL HOMOCIDE

By Rachel Larris From RH Reality Check

A bill passed by the Utah House and Senate this week, and waiting for the governor's signature, will make it a crime for a woman to have a miscarriage, and make induced abortion a crime in some instances. According Lynn M. Paltrow, executive director of National Advocates for Pregnant Women, what makes Utah's proposed law unique is that it is specifically designed to be punitive toward pregnant women, not those who might assist or cause an illegal abortion or unintended miscarriage.

The bill passed by legislators amends Utah's criminal statute to allow the state to charge a woman with criminal homicide for inducing a miscarriage or obtaining an illegal abortion. The basis for the law was a recent case in which a 17-year-old girl, who was seven months pregnant, paid a man $150 to beat her in an attempt to cause a miscarriage. Although the girl gave birth to a baby later given up for adoption, she was initially charged with attempted murder. However the charges were dropped because, at the time, under Utah state law a woman could not be prosecuted for attempting to arrange an abortion, lawful or unlawful.

The bill passed by the Utah legislature would change that. While the bill does not affect legally obtained abortions, it criminalizes any actions taken by women to induce a miscarriage or abortion outside of a doctor's care, with penalties including up to life in prison. "What is really radical and different about this statute is that all of the other states' feticide laws are directed to third party attackers," Paltrow explained. "[Other states' feticide laws] were passed in response to a pregnant woman who has been beaten up by a husband or boyfriend. Utah's law is directed to the woman herself and that's what makes it different and dangerous."

In addition to criminalizing an intentional attempt to induce a miscarriage or abortion, the bill also creates a standard that could make women legally responsible for miscarriages caused by "reckless" behavior. Using the legal standard of "reckless behavior" all a district attorney needs to show is that a woman behaved in a manner that is thought to cause miscarriage, even if she didn't intend to lose the pregnancy. Drink too much alcohol and have a miscarriage? Under the new law such actions could be cause for prosecution. "This creates a law that makes any pregnant woman who has a miscarriage potentially criminally liable for murder," says Missy Bird, executive director of Planned Parenthood Action Fund of Utah. Bird says there are no exemptions in the bill for victims of domestic violence or for those who are substance abusers. The standard is so broad, Bird says, "there nothing in the bill to exempt a woman for not wearing her seatbelt who got into a car accident."

Such a standard could even make falling down stairs a prosecutable event, such as the recent case in Iowa where a pregnant woman who fell down the stairs at her home was arrested under the suspicion she was trying to terminate her pregnancy. "This statute and the standards chosen leave a large number of pregnant women vulnerable to arrest even though they have no intention of ending a pregnancy," Paltrow said. "Whether or not the legislature intended this bill to become a tool for policing and punishing all pregnant women, if enacted this law would permit prosecution of a pregnant woman who stayed with her abusive husband because she was unable to leave. Not leaving would, under the 'reckless' standard, constitute conduct that consciously disregarded a substantial risk," Paltrow explained.

While many states have fetal homicide laws most apply only in the third trimester. Utah's bill would apply throughout the entirety of a woman's pregnancy. Even first trimester miscarriages could become the basis for a murder trial. Bird said she is also concerned that the law will drive pregnant women with substance abuse problems "underground;" afraid to seek treatment lest they have a miscarriage and be charged for murder. She said it directly reverses the attempts made, though a bill passed in 2008, to encourage pregnant women to seek treatment for addiction. Paltrow added that the commonly thought belief that pregnant women who use drugs are engaging in behavior that is likely to cause a stillbirth or a miscarriage is wrong. "Science now makes clear that drug use by pregnant women does not create unique risks for pregnant women, although it is likely that among those targeted for prosecutions by this statute will be women who go to term under drug usage," she said.

The bill does exempt from prosecution fetal deaths due to failure to follow medical advice, accept treatment or refuse a cesarean section. Bird said this exemption was likely because of a 2004 case where a woman who was pregnant with twins was later charged with criminal homicide after one of the babies was stillborn, which the state deemed due to her refusal to have a cesarean section. Planned Parenthood and the ACLU of Utah worked together to "amend the hell out of the bill," Bird said. One of their few accomplishments was at least dropping the legal standard of "negligence" from the bill, a much lower standard than "recklessness."

Bird was shaken with emotion after the Senate vote. "I broke down and cried," she admitted. "I normally never let these kind of [legislative] battles get to me." "What really sucks is that we had three supposed allies in the Senate, three [Democratic] women, who voted for the bill," Bird said, adding she didn't yet know why the three senators switched votes. Marina Lowe is legislative and policy counsel for the ACLU of Utah. She worked in tandem with Bird on trying to derail or at least mitigate the worst aspects of the bill. Lowe says at this point she doesn't know if there is a potential constitutional challenge to the law once it is signed by the governor. But she points to cases like the one in Iowa as exactly the kind of situation that might arise once this law is put into place.

Paltrow says this bill puts a lie to the idea that the pro-life movement cares about women. "For all these years the anti-choice movement has said 'we want to outlaw abortion, not put women in jail, but what this law says is 'no, we really want to put women in jail.'"

BELARUSIAN PUNK BAND MEMBERS ARRESTED FOR PARTICIPATING IN AN ILLEGAL RALLY

by Szarapow

Belarusian-language sources report that around 40 members of the Sayuz Palyakaw (which represents the country's ethnic Polish minority and is not recognized by the authorities) were arrested on February 15 for participation in an illegal rally in Hrodna on February 10, 2010 which protested the treatment of the Polish minority and commemorated the 70th anniversary of deportation of the Polish inhabitants of Western Belarus to Siberia after it was occupied by the Soviet Army at the start of WWII. Apparently the activists were on their way to the town of Valozhin where a court case related to the grievances of the local Polish community was to be heard today.

Those arrested include the organization's Head Council chairman Andrei Pachobut and its press secretary Ihar Bantsar who were both sentenced to five days in jail for their part in the action. Right after being sentenced Bantsar declared a hunger strike demanding to be released.

Pachobut used to be a bass player in the anarchist punk band DEVIATION which his brother Stas fronts. Bantsar is a singer with the Hrodna streetpunk band MISTER X.

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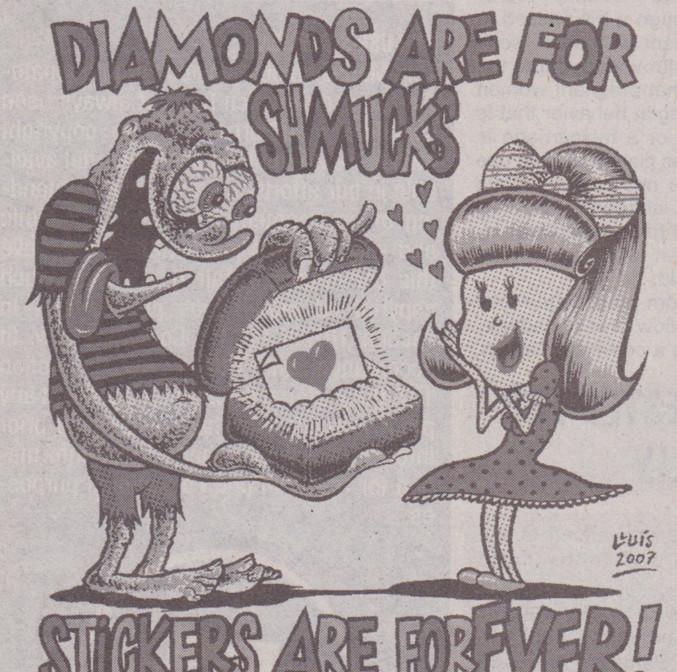

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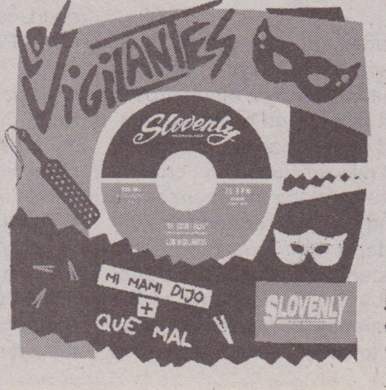

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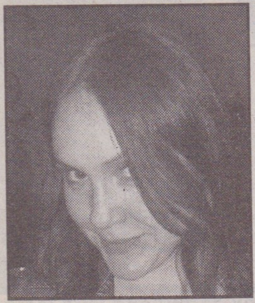
WE SHIP WORLDWIDE

MRR asks YOU:

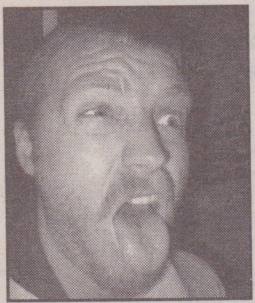
WHAT'S THE SCOOP?

This month's question: What's the best punk band or genre to fuck to?
(asked over Valentine's Day weekend, duh.)

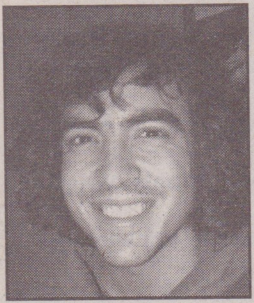


Tessa, 23, San Francisco
The MC5. Obviously.

Maggie, 25, San Francisco
Metal, specfically the band Sleep. Plus their name is fitting. Wait, people still read *Maximum Rocknroll*?

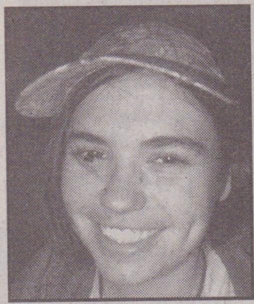


Reece, 23, Lahaina HI
The Offspring are fun to fuck to.

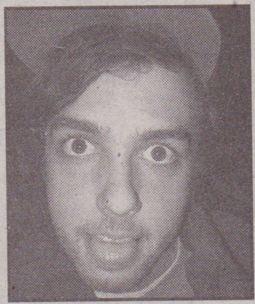


Sean, 23, Oakland
The Descendents song "Pervert."

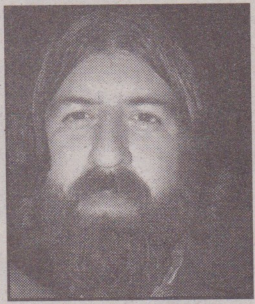
Amelia, 25, Oakland
That's easy. American Splits.



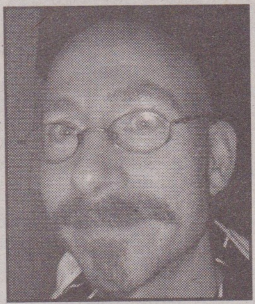
Jen, 23, Oakland
You say that you're my friend. But I know that you're one of them. Or smooth listening.



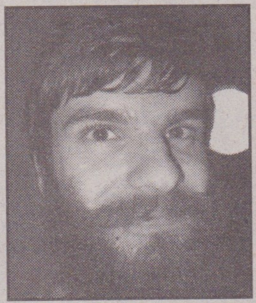
Sean, 22, Oakland
The first Damned record.



Moses, 33, San Francisco
The Modern Lovers.



Lee, 43, nowhere
The Damned or Discharge. So I'm showing my age.



Greg, 23, San Francisco
Neu! All their songs are ten minutes long, so you got plenty of time.

The Spits

I'm sitting in the secret clubhouse/compound of the Spits. In the middle of all the taxidermy and lava lamps is the band, wearing mirrored cop shades and passing a huge, smelly joint between them. Erin Wood (bass/ vocals) and Lance Phelps (drums) are playing a heated game of table hockey and Sean Wood (guitar, vocals) is engrossed in what looks like a losing battle with Tekken 3. There is a Mexican girl who is very pretty, except for her lazy eye, who sits and smiles nervously at me. I'm told her name is Angel, that she doesn't speak very good English, and that she is the newest Spits keyboardist.
Interview by Max / Photos by Canderson.

MRR: You guys wanna do this interview?
Erin: You wanna hit this?

MRR: I'm good, man thanks.
Erin: Don't be a little puss.
Sean: You wanna do this interview, you gotta hit the ganj spliff.
Lance: Or we could just sick the dog on ya.

MRR: Yeah, what the hell. OK, let's get baked.
Erin: Ok, now we can talk.

MRR: So congratulations on your new album. It rules. It's great to hear new material from you guys.
Erin: Neat.
Lance: Sweet.
Sean: Total.
Lance: We're working on another one right now. It's probably gonna be pretty good. We're thinking of calling it *The Spits*.
Sean: or maybe *Rip Hella Phat*.
Erin: or we might call it *Why Did the Cyborg Cross the Road?*

MRR: You guys have a lot of songs about robots. What's up?
Lance: In our world, robots represent absolute evil and anti-fun. We totally rage against the machines.
Erin: Wow, there's another album title!

MRR: So you guys are all from the same small town of Allegan, MI. How did you end up starting the band?
Lance: We were at a party out in a trailer in the Allegan forest, where we met this old Indian dude. We ended up taking acid with this dude and he told us it was our destiny to go west and start a punk rock revolution. Which we did by moving to Seattle and playing open mic nights until we were eventually discovered by Glen Danzig. The rest, as they say, is history.

MRR: Wow, that sounds like total bullshit.
Erin: That's cuz it is. What happened was, we were visited from the future by a man who claimed to be Sean's son. He came back to warn us about Skynet, and how we were the only ones who could save...

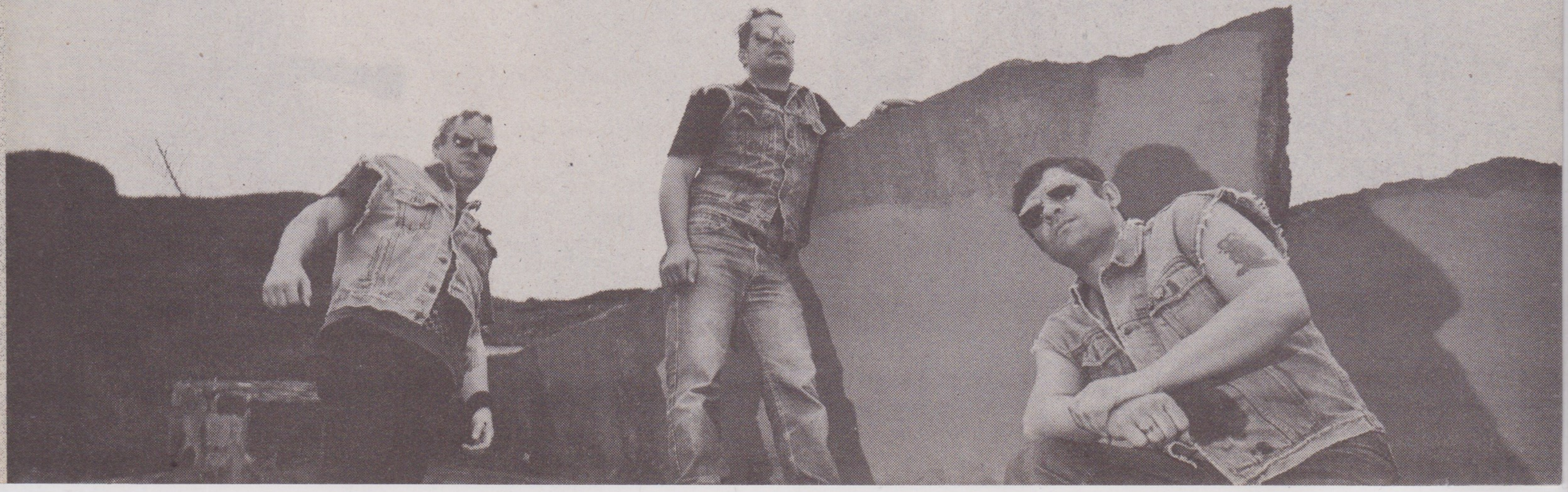
MRR: Dude, that's the Terminator!
Erin: That's right! The terminators are robots encased in living flesh, who were sent back to stop the band from forming, and..

MRR: Ok, never mind. Ummm, so, Angel, how is it being like #15 in a long line of keyboardists? How did you get this gig? Do you ever fear for your life? Do you think you will be able to break the keyboard curse?
Angel: Uhhh.... I love the Spits!

MRR. Ok...let's just make this easy. If you could be any famous person from history, who would you be?
Sean: Eddie Van Halen.
Erin: A sleestak from *Land of the Lost.*
Lance: Either Long Dong Silver, or Abraham Lincoln.
Erin: Oh, wait, I wanna be Nikola Tesla!
Sean: I'm sticking with Eddie.
Lance: Then Erin should be Alex and I could be David Lee Roth, and Angel could be Michael Anthony.
Angel: ¿QUE?

MRR: So besides the new full-length album, you also released a four-song single on Slovenly. Any comments on that.
Erin: We recorded the cover song "PAIN" (from the TV show *CHIPS*, the punk episode) in a barn in France with Lo Spider who records a lot of our European friends bands like the Magnetix. The single is basically just a bunch of songs that didn't make it on the album.

MRR: You have been seen touring around in an RV lately. Can you share any highlights from the recent Mutant tour?
Lance: There were a lot. Doing blow in the basement of the biker party in Milwaukee, Erin getting pissed at the crowd in Madison and calling them all pussies after every song, foraging for firewood all night at a campground in Montana.
Erin: The New York show at the Cakeshop, where the crowd almost killed all of us, and themselves.
Lance: Yeah, there was blood and pieces of skin stuck to my bass drum at the end of that one.
Erin: Playing Kalamazoo is always a highlight.
Sean: How about low points? Like when we stayed at the photographer from Spin's loft in Brooklyn and Lance got wasted and ended up pissing in the dude's Craftsmen toolbox in the middle of the night?



Lance: Or when Sean got all pissed and pulled over in that park in Cleveland so he could sleep, and everyone went to opposite ends of the park to get away from each other, and the keyboard player (not Angel) was sitting at a picnic table crying.
Erin: Sleeping in Walmart parking lots and having to climb on top of the RV to put a tarp over the leaky roof.
Sean: Getting AIDS.

MRR: It all sounds very exciting. Is it still fun to be in a band after all this time? You guys have been around for a long time.
Sean: It keeps getting more and more fun. We have more friends and fans all over now. People take care of us wherever we go.
Erin: We are like famous bullfighters. Women throw flowers down at us from their windows when we drive into town.
Lance: I was just talking about this with Governor Schwarttznegger, and he said "I can't believe how big you guys are getting." We had a good laugh about it. He really is a lovely man.

MRR: Wow. So is there a message behind the Spits?
Sean: Have fun. DUH!
Erin: The message is: "Come to our shows, buy our records, shirts, and toys. Give us drugs."

MRR: So what are the Spits plans for 2010?
Erin: Stop Skynet!
Sean: Rip up the Streets!
Lance: Get Osama bin Laden to design the new album cover.

MRR: Alright guys, I guess I should probably get going.
Lance: Be careful, there are strange things 'round here in these woods at night.
Erin: Don't you wanna check out our skate ramp?
Sean: Yeah, dude. Get the fuck outta here.

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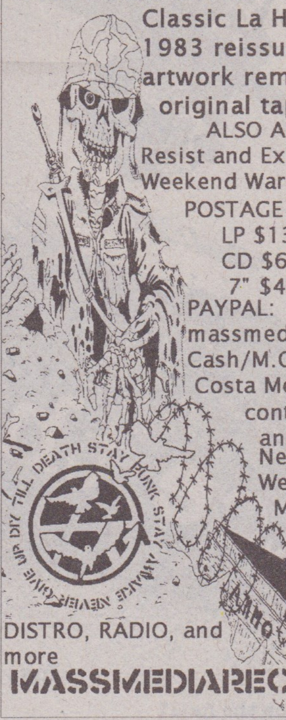

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Leisure time with face the rail

So the Bay Area is full of wacky crazy bands. Some good, some not so good, some best left forgotten. Then there's Face the Rail, a quartet of twenty somethings, aren't they all, that have been rocking out and skating pools for the past three years. They have a new record out that has nothing really to do with skateboarding but that's okay. You can skate to it or pursue other leisurely activities, such as drinking at your favorite pool with your bros or hitting up the local skate park on Sunday. Just kidding. No, I'm not. There is some really progressive and emotional work on this piece o vinyl. What? Yeah I kind of wrote that correctly. Obviously there's more than meets the eye to these young lads. Take a gander at yonder interview for the full story. Oh, for some reason they want me to mention that they were in lots of other bands like Second Opinion, Shanghai Surprise, Ecoli, No Dice, what the fuck, you don't care. Those bands aren't even around anymore and Face the Rail is all about the future, or some progressive hippy shit like that. Just read, punk.

Interview by Jason Gellis

MRR: Who is Face the Rail?
Max: I play drums.
Jake: Uh, guitar.
Andrew: Singing.
Randy: On da bass.

MRR: You guys have new LP out on Tank Crimes/City Records, talk about it.
Max: We recorded it about a year ago and it just came out a month ago. Willy from No Options was originally going to put it out but ended up moving to Germany, which meant I had to finance it myself. No hard feelings, but it was a huge delay. I was at a Hazmat show talking to Scotty from Tank Crimes about helping me screen the record sleeves at Monolith and he offered to split release the records with me. So that's what happened.

MRR: Where was it recorded?
Max: It was recorded by Greg Wilkinson at Earhammer studios in Oakland.
Jake: Yeah Greg does some pretty awesome stuff.
Randy: Yeah! Greg's the shit.
Jake: Yeah.
Max: He has the touch; I recommend every band recording with him.

MRR: I've listened to the record and seen you guys many times, and you definitely jump around within music genres, from surf guitar to wanky guitar solos, but you come back to a real early '80s California sound. Is there a specific sound you guys are going for?
Jake: I think we made it like a surf/punk band and then we kind of developed that and included a DC influence, like the Revolution Summer era. It's definitely going in that direction, I feel.

MRR: Revolution Summer like the Faith or more like Rites of Spring?
Jake: Like Rites of Spring, kind of.
Max: With cool guitar solos. Which I like.
Jake: It's getting emotional, more emotional.
Max: You grow up.

MRR: Really? Is Face the Rail growing up? You guys are all in your early twenties.
Max: It just morphed that way because when we started we were mainly listening to those early Posh Boy EPs, you know? And I think Jake was already there on guitar but the rest of us had to progress to catch up. The rest of us were not where we wanted to be musically.
Randy: Right.
Max: So we definitely started emulating early hardcore but really started expanding into some slower more melodic stuff.
Jake: Yeah, at first we wanted to be more like a skate rock band and we kind of still are but we haven't been writing songs about skateboarding lately.
Max: We're definitely keeping away from skate references. Obviously the name Face the Rail is about skateboarding. No more skate songs for now.

MRR: There's a lot of different genres creeping into your music and punk in general. Do you think now it's more acceptable to include a wide range of genres in punk? I mean, first you guys say skate punk, then surf, then DC hardcore, which includes several varied styles.
Jake: I think that the different genres that started creeping in the '80s, now it's easier to look at them with outside eyes, you know? There's room to experiment and bring those in without having to worry about what specific genre or subculture they belong to.
Randy: We're trying to develop our own sound and write our own songs. I like lots of music but I'm not specifically trying to copy someone, just do my own thing with the music I like listening to.
Jake: Totally. By being more open to different styles, we can move in way more directions
Max: I think that now, as opposed to 30 years ago, it's more accepted to meld a lot of different styles in music, which is a way to move forward.

MRR: If it sounds cool, you go with it.
Everyone: Yes.

MRR: Listening to the record, there are some huge jumps in songwriting and playing styles, some very drastic. But this creates a strange soundscape that seems to really work for you guys.
Max: I like to think that the record works as a whole.
Jake: In the end it really melds together but you can easily tell when our influences pop up.

MRR: How has the Bay Area responded to you guys?
Jake: It all depends on what shows we end up on.
Max: Sometimes we have a great crowd; other times no one shows up. Hit or miss.
Randy: We've played some great shows.

Max: We played at Balazo and half the people were into it and the other half made fun of us.
Jake: A lot of people hear us and are not open to something that sounds different than straight forward hardcore. They probably think we're really wussy and emotional. But we do come from a background in hardcore. For people that know us, they're more open.
Max: We loaded out once and some dude was like, "you guys suck." Whatever, he's probably lame anyways.

MRR: How was the record release?
Jake: We played with Deadfall, who were one of the scene leaders along with other bands in the early '00s, so it was great.
Max: Awesome show! I remember seeing them when I was fifteen and they were amazing and here they are playing with us now and are still great guys that are down for us.
Randy: It's good to see a lot of those bands are still chill dudes and don't have rock star attitudes even though they've made a name for themselves.
Jake: I mean, Scotty put out the record.

MRR: The Bay Area has a great scene with a diverse set of bands. There's hardcore, crust, metal, '77 punk, garage, etc. The shows seem to really reflect that with a good line up of different bands, yet here you guys are playing a little of it all.
Max: It was a natural progression. Bands can get along while exemplifying different styles.
Randy: I get sick of going to shows where everyone is playing in the same style of music.
Max: Over and over again. It gets boring.

MRR: Your lyrics stay away from politics and deal more with skating and girl problems. Bush is out and Obama is in. Are politics no longer important to you guys?
Andrew: Me personally?

MRR: You write the lyrics.
Andrew: I didn't care about Bush and I don't care too much about politics. What am I going to say that's new? I'd rather write about things that are directly affecting my everyday life. Being frustrated. Being stuck in a lame situation. Girls breaking my heart. Not the government fucking me over. I know they suck. We all know they're not on our side. Yes it's real, but I've got other shit to worry about.
Max: Politics and punk go hand in hand, but after awhile I want to forget about things I can't change. I can't change politician's minds and I'm not going to grab a gun and start shooting people.
Andrew: Bush was to the past eight years of hardcore what Reagan was to the '80s.
Jake: That led to the resurgence of hardcore with a new generation playing, but I think looking for inspiration elsewhere is good too.

MRR: You think Obama will make for another good four years of music?
Jake: Yeah, I think everyone thought he would change the world. He's been presented as this transformative politician, but hasn't done anything.
Max: Same as Bush, same as Clinton, they're all business minded.
Andrew: Yeah, they're just trying to make money.

MRR: Thirty years on, does punk mean anything? I mean, you're not supposed to listen to anyone over 30, so why listen? Should you listen to punk?
Jake: No.
Max: I don't know, what does it mean to be punk? What does it mean not to be? It was so much easier to define at the beginning, but it's been mixed and melded so much. It's a label that needs to be done away with. There are still parts that I identify with, but sometimes I feel like I don't identify.

MRR: At the beginning you work for the punk ideal but in the end it works for you. I guess you take what you want from it.
Max: Punk had a huge positive influence on me but at the same time it can box you in.
Andrew: It can easily lead to a tribal mentality.
Randy: A lot of punks think everyone else is assholes, but they can be just as bad.
Max: It's like any other group of people. There are bigots and racists and assholes in punk.
Randy: Punk's cool when you're thirteen.
Andrew: There is no punk.

MRR: Well if there is no punk, then who is Face the Rail?
Max: Four weird dudes playing music in a basement.

MRR: Good answer. So upcoming releases. I know you just recorded a new 7" but pretend I don't know that.
Jake: Face the Rail has one new record recorded. A one sided 12".
Max: I hate 10"s.
Jake: Maybe two sided.

MRR: Tours?
Jake: Uh, we need shows. I don't know about tour but summer is right around the corner so...

MRR: Summer is like ten months away.
Jake: I think ahead.
Max: We have plans.

MRR: What are they?
Max: Uh, I don't know but we want to go to Portland in the spring. They have skate parks and we like to skate.

Andrew: We get boners for skate parks.
Max: Let's shut up about skating before we look stupid.
Jake: Too late.
Randy: Umm
Andrew: Next.

MRR: So I've asked you a little about the past 30 years of punk. What about the next 30? What about the future?
Max: The future.
Randy: Oh fuck!
Max: The future is now.

MRR: What does that mean?
Max: What?
Randy: I wish I hated technology but I don't.
Max: It makes everything easier.
Randy: Listening to DRI on my iPod instead of talking to cute girls.
Jake: I like that.
Andrew: What, listening to DRI on your iPod?
Jake: No, listening to Devo on my iPod.

MRR: I actually meant punk music. Can punk last another 30 years? Or even rock and roll?
Jake: It's hard to say. The only real constant music is classical. Rock is only the past 50 years. I guess traditional rock guitar structures will last. It's music for the people.

MRR: There is a lack of pretension at the heart of rock. Grab a guitar and start a band. You don't need to study violin for ten years.
Max: There will always be some pissed off kid in the suburbs. Whether its punk or rock or anything, it seems that electronic music offers the last options for doing something new.
Jake: We should get a Theremin.
Randy: OOooOOOOoooo OOOO Ooooo OOO
Jake: I want to play an electromagnetic field.
Max: The future!

MRR: Any last words?
Max: Keep on keepin' on. Don't let yourself get boxed in.
Randy: Are those really your last words?
Max: I guess I should think of something better.
Jake: I've got nothing.
Andrew: Give up.

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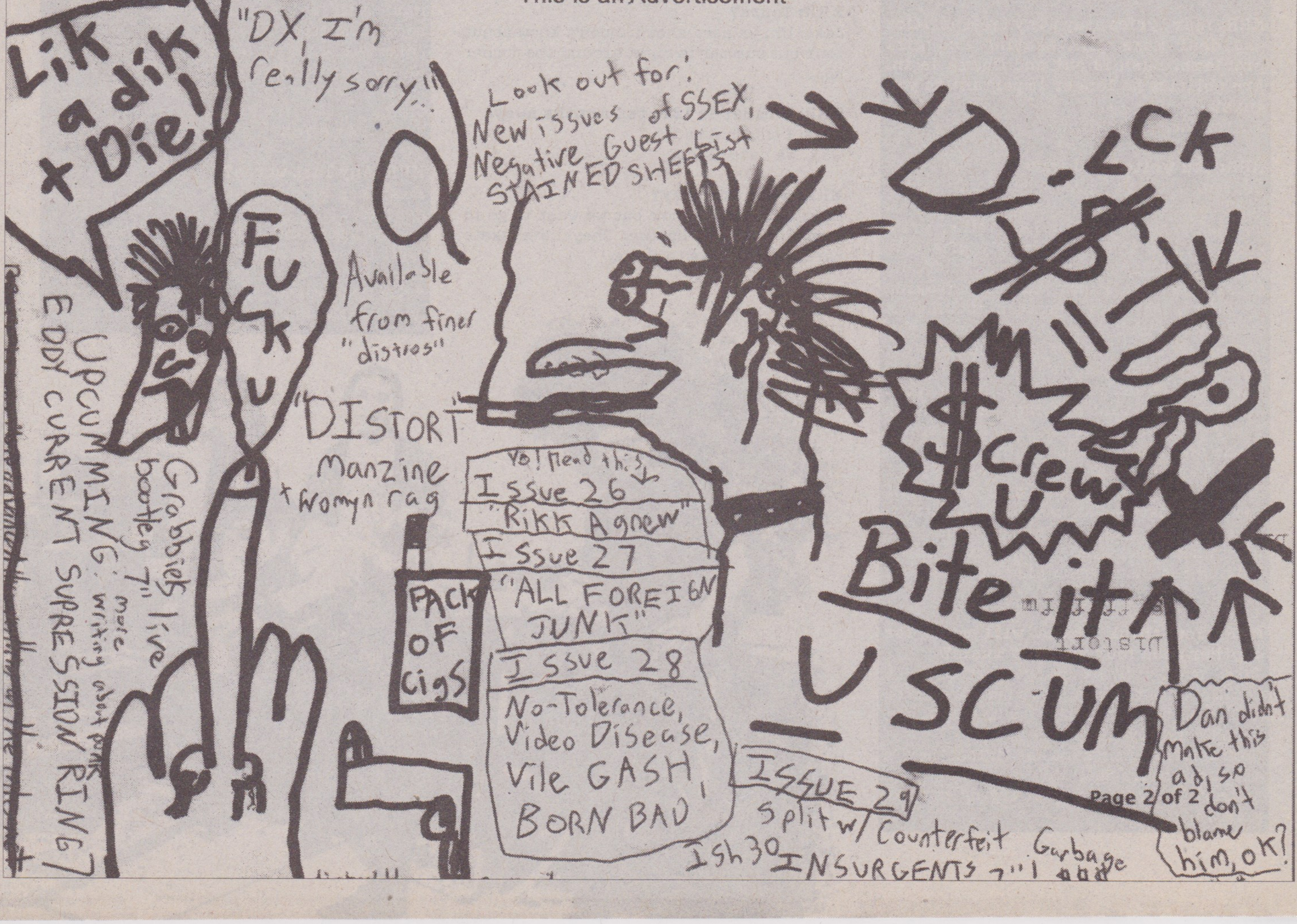

MOB RULES

Britain is like small pan full of rocks and stones, and when shaken, Leeds' Mob Rules come to the top. Having acquired the status of The Best Hardcore Group In The Country™, they've gone relatively quiet of late whilst they work on new material. Their two awesome 7"s — The Donor and their split with Crowd Control — are brutal outbursts that sound like From Enslavement to Obliteration-era Napalm Death with Unsane's rhythm section. Their newer songs bring a feel in the vein of Flag's "Swinging Man" to the table. Where there was previously little action higher up on the fret board, there's now a wealth of sprawling post-free-jazz guitar noise.

At one point in the interview, bassist Paul Steere asks if I think the kind of music a group listens to has anything to do with the kind of music they make. There are a number of different answers to that question which would all be correct. But the fact that Mob Rules' personnel have highly omnivorous musical tastes, and are most knowledgeable about the wider world of sonic disharmony, is undoubtedly one reason why they manage to channel so much more on an enormous feeling of intensity than most other hardcore groups that are out there. I doubt many of the groups on Dead & Gone have any Ramleh or Peter Brötzmann in their collections.

I feel some further descriptive text is necessary to try and conjure up a more specific sense of what they're like, for the benefit of Maximum Rocknroll readers whose grasp of the many possible variations on punk rock makes the Inuit culture's breakdown of what different types of snow there are seem like a relatively narrow codification system… Nah, just "negative" will do.

Foreword and interview by Nicholas Jones / Post Scriptum by Conor Rickford / Photos by Matt WBPS

Campbell, Thomas (vocals): How have you been since our last interview?

MRR: Do you know what the first question is? It's been eighteen months since we last had a chat. How's the career trajectory panning out?

Paul Steere (bass): Well, you'll notice that we're in a much nicer van than when you last spoke to us, which we also own, so that's indicative of at least some level of success.

MRR: So, you've earned enough from playing to have bought a van. Excellent.

Paul: We no longer rent panel vans. We *own* our own luxurious one. That's a level of success.

Conor: Other than that, I'd say our star is on the wane a little bit. We haven't been able to play shows in certain towns now for a while. Like Nottingham.

MRR: Why?

Conor: We must have blotted our copybook at some point. I don't know, we haven't played there that much and we haven't played as many shows really.

Paul: In Wales.

Conor: Wales we can't get booked in.

Campbell: What happened in Nottingham, do you think?

Conor: I don't know.

Campbell: Is it because of the guy from Jesus of Spazzareth?

Conor: It may have been.

Paul: Yeah.

MRR: Are you sure it isn't just that no one's had an available night when you've been around?

Paul: That's most likely.

Conor: It's possible we've read too much into that. Not that we need any more shows than we've got.

Campbell: I don't really like leaving my bedroom. I find it hard enough to go to the kitchen, so I'd find it quite hard to go to Cardiff or Newport.

Conor: Or any other third world region.

Campbell: Anywhere which is more than a five-minute walk from my kitchen I don't really like.

MRR: You've been playing new material that sounds quite different recently. It could be the difference between *Damaged* and *My War* for you.

Conor: Well, you've got to have a *Damaged* first, haven't you?

Campbell: And we didn't have that.

Paul: You've got to be exceptionally popular first for that to really work, otherwise you just go from being a moderately popular band to a band that no one likes.

Campbell: Yeah, I don't think we've ever sold in excess of 100,000 records. If we did, I wouldn't be wearing this jacket. I would be wearing a gold jacket.

MRR: How many records have you sold?

Campbell: 30,000.

Conor: Just under 30,000. Actually, 300 of the 7", that comp's almost sold out. It's not a polite question.

Campbell: It's like asking your mother how old she is. If she's got a problem with telling you, it's obviously very old — and you should leave it at that.

Conor: We've sold 700 records, and my mum's about 58.

MRR: I never realized you were so precious.

Campbell: A question for Nick — how old's your mum?

MRR: You'll have to ask her that. How old's yours?

Campbell: I don't know.

Ben Hirst (guitar): Mine's 49.

Conor: She was but a child when she had you.

Ben: She was 26. Fuck you.

Conor: Would you say it's indicative of something happening at *Maximum Rocknroll*—a decline in standards possibly—that they have to get interviews from bands that have only sold 700 records?

MRR: Well, on the subject of gender and age —

Paul: Which is what we're always doing.

MRR: — what demographic do you envision Mob Rules' music being ideally suited to?

Paul: I think disinterest knows no gender. So, I think we appeal to disinterested people of all genders.

Campbell: Women. Women should be our main audience, but they're not.

Conor: I don't think we've got a real audience anymore. It's mainly just people who are waiting for something else to happen, but sometimes we're the last thing that happens.

Paul: I don't think bands tend to attract "audiences" any more, I think we're on the wrong scale to be thinking about audiences.

Campbell: And also, the main reason we get to play gigs is we're the only band in the UK who has a complete backline.

Paul: As far as we understand, it isn't possible for a show south of Birmingham to happen without us playing because there's no equipment south of Birmingham. So, here we are in Brighton — about as far away as we can get from our hometown and stay in the British Isles. And we've got *all* the equipment for the show.

MRR: Have you ever played with anyone who has a substantial backline?

Conor: American touring bands.

Paul: Yes, American touring bands — the bands that people moan about.

MRR: And do they let you use their backlines?

Paul: Yes.

Conor: If we ask.

MRR: The drummer from Sic Alps put Stroidy straight about the English cultural standard of always having the touring band supply the drum kit.

Conor: Well, I've got sympathy for them, but at the same time... There are shit bands that wouldn't get any shows if they didn't bring a drum kit with them. I think they'd get a lot less shows. And that's what's more important — their drum kit — rather than their music.

Campbell: Because there's an absence of equipment in the UK.

MRR: What's your least favorite region of the UK to play?

Campbell: Well, unfortunately, we haven't played all of the UK. So we can only comment on places we *have* played. We haven't played Cornwall or Devon. Or anywhere in Scotland. I, personally, didn't have a particularly good time in Cardiff.

Paul: I think it's convenient for the Welsh to think that we don't like them.

MRR: Conor, you're suspiciously quiet. What's your take on Wales?

Conor: Wales. Well, I've heard it described by people who live *in* Wales as, well — that, basically, everything that happens in the UK tends to happen in Wales about five years after the rest of the country. So, for instance, now they're going through this big revival of bands that *kind of* sound like — uh, who is it? —Right Brigade. So, we had that in the rest of the UK about five years ago, so why now?

Paul: In My Eyes hoodies at shows.

Conor: Yeah. I mean, that's not on, is it? And I think the biggest problem is that they love each other's bands to this degree where they don't even know what their bands sound like anymore. It's more just like "Holy shit, it's a band from Wales! I wonder what they sound like. Actually, *that* doesn't matter — they're Welsh, so they must be good." So, Wales has a lot of bad things.

Campbell: Nick Griffin.

Conor: Nick Griffin lives in Wales.

Campbell: I just thought I'd point out an actual bad thing.

Conor: And even he doesn't wear an In My Eyes hoodie at a gig.

Paul: But he has got really *strange* eyes.

Conor: So in *his* eyes if you've got wob-eyes, then Wales is good. But for the record, I think we'll give it a miss. Like, we don't ever need to go back there for any circumstances, so...

MRR: Campbell's on the verge of saying something...

Campbell: I don't think I am. I'm just thinking about... We're playing this gig this evening in Brighton and there's this really out-of-date kind of punk kitsch. In Brighton it's just gross. They play loads of crap.

Paul: Well, they're exclusively playing Le Tigre from what I can hear.

Campbell: And No Doubt.

Conor: So, it's a bit like — for anyone who's lived in Leeds — Pussywhipped.

MRR: That means attendance tonight is going to be *poor*.

Campbell: It's like Pussywhipped except with more decorative Barbie dolls.

MRR: Within moments of being inside, I was speaking to a man with long brown hair and breasts. Pussywhipped also has a man with long brown hair and breasts on the team, and I've not met any others.

Paul: I'm sure we'll go down fabulously.

Conor: Well, you were asking us about our target audience. And I don't know what it is, but I know it's not them. And they're going to know it's not them as well.

Campbell: All I'm going to say is, we seem to be a band who polarize people. But mainly, in a sense, the people *don't* like us. And we quite like our own material. So, in that sense, we polarize people. I hear it and think "Wow, this music these guys are playing is brilliant. I love it." But, I don't think everyone else really likes us. And that's fine.

Conor: Our currency is depleting a little bit, isn't it. Because I think as you try and do something slightly more outside of the box, or outside of what you've done before, no longer will people be able to say things like "That was really fast" as a positive appraisal of a band.

Paul: A lot of people come up to me after shows and go "That was great. It was really fast." And then over the last few months people have been coming up to be and going "That was really

great. I really liked those bits when you were fast." As we slow down, it seems to be having an adverse effect on our popularity.
MRR: That's why I deployed the *My War* analogy.
Paul: I suppose so, but I mean —
Campbell: It would be conceited of us to –
Paul: — to put us on that level. But that is a standard cultural touchstone, I suppose. But we don't place ourselves on *that* level.
MRR: Well, we've got that straight. You don't place yourself on the level of Black Flag. Although people might have thought you did considering how fast you were. But actually not. Say you were going to go on a tour of the west coast of the US. Are there any punk pilgrimages you would like to make, Campbell?
Campbell: Yeah, yeah. If we were going to say not the west coast, but just the north of America, the United States of America, then currently, I'd want to go to Cleveland, Ohio. I would want to go to that bar called Now, That's Class. I'd like to go there.
MRR: Why?
Campbell: Because that's the only place that's had consistently good bands for the last fifteen years outside of Japan. Punk. So, I'd want to go there.
MRR: Who are the bands?
Campbell: I don't know. Well, I'm just going to namedrop really obvious bands.
Conor: Well, like...?
Campbell: Yeah, like Cider, Integrity, Puncture Wound, H100s...
Paul: Real household names.
Campbell: To be honest I wouldn't want to make that many pilgrimages, I'd just go record shopping. And eat burritos. Actually, I'd just go to loads of supermarkets. I'd go to the Whole Foods salad bar and do what I did when I lived in Chicago and not realize that, unlike in the UK where salad bars are measured by the size of the box, in America they're measured by weight. So I spent $39.00 at the Whole Foods salad bar. So I was like "Wow, these chicken wings, wow, I'm going to get 25." But, you know, it was a bad idea. And obviously I couldn't put the food back. So I'd probably just do that if we went to America. I'd spend more time doing what I did the last time I was in America and explaining to people that I'm not Irish. Which I had to do *a lot* when I was in Chicago.
MRR: Do you have Irish heritage?
Campbell: Arguably.
Paul: What would Nick Griffin say?
Campbell: Yeah.
Paul: I went to a Catholic school, so I've been on enough *actual* pilgrimages to not need to go on any more.
MRR: Conor, people have been commenting that you've gotten pretty buff recently. Do you think that as you get tougher, Mob Rules' music will get weaker?
Conor: As I spend less time practising drumming? I've put on a lot of weight recently. That's one thing that's changed in the last eighteen months. I weigh two stone more now than I did then. So, I dread to think what might happen in another eighteen months. But I lost all my gains, all my weight gains, when I went to Vietnam. It's hard to eat all the time in a world where you can't understand *anything* that's around you, and you've got a very finite diet.
Paul: But you can buy crows in a Coke can.
Conor: Crows in a Coke can, yeah.
Campbell: Bears in jars. Baby bears drowned in jars of alcohol.
Conor: Like all Russian bears. I don't think I've gotten to a stage where you could ever call me "buff" by any description. But, I think, has the music got weaker? Yeah, I think. I feel a bit weaker. I feel weaker in myself, but maybe it's because I'm not exerting myself as much any more, so maybe I just don't *feel* like I'm getting it done, but I actually am. Although saying that, I've broken more cymbals in the last eighteen months than I've broken in my whole career of playing drums to date. So that's a financial burden, and also a pick-me-up when I think, "Ooh, maybe I *am* stronger than I thought." So there you go: breaking things that cost me loads of money.
MRR: An awesome way to get your self-esteem up.
Paul: That's what being in a band is *all* about.
Conor: Do you feel heavier, or were you heavier then?
MRR: Heavier then. I've started swimming since then.
Campbell: You see, that's the worst. That's not the sort of exercise you should be doing. I think swimming's fine. But you want to get into *anything* else.
Conor: Is this because you can't swim?
[Cue a load of faux-jeering from all, and a lot of non-faux protesting from Campbell]
Campbell: Of course I can swim. This is Great Britain, not Pathetic Britain. I can swim every stroke apart from butterfly. Which is the best stroke.
Conor: That's two strokes isn't it, then?
Campbell: Why?
Conor: Oh, no, three. Breaststroke, front-crawl and back… flip?
MRR: When was the last time you went swimming?
Campbell: …About a month ago.
MRR: Why did you go swimming?
Campbell: Because I do like going swimming, but more for recreation than for exercise. Unless you're really good at it.
Conor: It's more like chess.
Campbell: I consider it to be a pub sport.
MRR: I don't get in the casual swim area and lie there floating on my back.
Campbell: It annoys me when I go swimming because there's always some people in either the slow or medium lanes who *walk*. Rather than swim.
MRR: Maybe they're disabled.
Campbell: No, they're not. They're old people and obese people. And basically, they should be in the slow lane and not the middle lane. Because if I'm trying to warm up before I get in the fast lane, it's not on, is it?
MRR: There is a politics to it.
Campbell: There's no politics, there's just –
Conor: A hierarchy of needs.
Campbell: No, there's a level of over-assessment of one's abilities which takes place in swim baths.
MRR: I hear you've gotten quite into wresting.
Campbell: No.
Conor: Yes, you have.
MRR: I heard you were training a –
Campbell: No. No, no, no, no, no, no —
MRR: I heard that you were mentoring a wrestler?
Campbell: No, this is a rumor. This is a malicious rumor. It's not true. I think that Ultimate Wresting is reasonably interesting. But then again, I get interested in most things, too.
Conor: Ultimate Fighting is kind of like the wresting of the new generation, isn't it? Every one of us probably watched Tatanka or Mr. Perfect in the WWF. Whereas I don't know much about Ultimate Fighting, other than it looks like something you can see on any British street on any given night, really. I'm not sure what my feelings are about it.
Campbell: But, no. If I had the necessary skills myself, I would be interested in training a wrestler. Budding wrestlers, do not contact me.
Conor: Not yet.
MRR: Conor, you've got a question for yourself.
Conor: Yes. My question is not just for the female readers of *Maximum Rocknroll* or the readers who'll be more orientated towards males. But, when does a craggy-faced man cease to be just an ugly thing and become an attractive thing? For instance, Gordon Ramsey —I don't know if they've heard of him in America—Lou Reed, Viggo Mortensen. I mean, what is wrong with these men? Where do these faces appear from?
Paul: It's *elemental*. It's all to do with power. They look like they're carved out of—they look like they're natural. They look like they're a force of nature.
Conor: That's three different trajectories though, isn't it? Because Gordon Ramsey…
MRR: Gordon Brown and Gordon Ramsey look pretty similar, actually.
Campbell: Apart from one of them is great and one of them is pathetic.
Conor: I'm wondering about the different trajectories of someone like Gordon Ramsey and Lou Reed, who has obviously had a slightly different upbringing. How do they end up being roughly the same, in terms of how craggy their face is?
MRR: If you could make a deal with the devil and say, if you were the most charismatic, successful man — but you've got to have a craggy face — Conor, would you do it?
Conor: Well, that's a win-win there, because it's charisma that means the craggy face isn't ugly, I think.
MRR: Well, that's the answer to your question.
Conor: Yeah, that is the answer.
Paul: Did we pass the test?
Conor: But, when will my face become craggy, if ever? How do I gain this?
MRR: I think this is a very self-aware line of questioning — you've got a face that doesn't show any sign of cragginess.
Conor: Not yet.
Campbell: Nick, who's got the craggiest face in Mob Rules?
MRR: Do you really want me to answer that question? Turn the lights on, then… No, none of you have craggy faces on the scale that we're talking about.
Conor: But, if you ask us in another eighteen months… that's why we're not as popular anymore. Because people were *hoping* for us to develop craggy faces.
Campbell: But, maybe you could make the

point that maybe Conor's increased weight has decreased our popularity. Because now we're too heavy a band physically, and it detracts from our heaviness musically. And these things are best when they're mutually distinct.
Conor: I like to see small men being heavy. I don't like to see heavy men being small.
MRR: It's like the big guy in *Instrument* talking about why he likes Fugazi — because of the *controlled* energy.
Campbell: He can't control his energy.
Conor: He can't control his estrogen.
MRR: What were you listening to in the van on the way down here?
Campbell: It will look like we're namedropping. Awesome music.
MRR: Okay.
Conor: We were listening to stuff off my iPod, which has a little radio transmitter. And Paul had to hold it at a very certain angle so he looked like a T-Rex.
Campbell: I can probably remember, in order. We listened to the Antidote 7", we listened to the first Saint Vitus 12", we listened to, then…
MRR: Vinyl, in a car?
Campbell: Uh, no. Digitalized versions of the aforementioned records.
Paul: What else did we listen to? Grand Funk Railroad, Captain Beyond, Melvins' *Bullhead*, Moss Icon…
Conor: Sonic Youth. It's been a very long ride.
Campbell: *Hold That Tiger*, the best Sonic Youth record. I think we can agree on that.
Ben: A short blast of Metallica.
Campbell: …*And Justice For All*, by the way.
Conor: *Honky Chateau* by Elton John.
Campbell: It's very annoying.
Conor: Something from *The Big Pink* by —
[At this point, a group of around 35 people dressed in black jumpsuits, carrying batons and rather flimsy looking riot shields jog past the van]
Campbell: There's some sort of anti-fascist march happening around us.
Paul: If they fuck with us, I'll give them a taste of anarchy.
Campbell: We saw a black bloc warm-up just before we got into the van and it looked like a cross between the Scouts and what our North American readers might know as cross-fit. I was quite impressed. In English, it's an anaerobic class. It was paradigm busting.
Paul: Do you think that what a band listens to really has anything to do with the kind of music they play?
MRR: Are you asking me that?
Paul: I'm just thinking out loud.
Campbell: I think accessibility to music of a high quality, no matter what it's level of obscurity hitherto, is now so high that I don't think it has as much impact as it would have done.
Paul: It seems that exposure to good music does not engender good taste. These days.
Campbell: I also think that this decade has been significantly better than the '90s for hardcore. And I think that is mainly down to increased accessibility to the classic records of the '80s. Which, when I was a young teenager were nigh on impossible to find in the UK.
Paul: I think it's safe to say that in the '90s you had hardcore as a formula going out as far as it can go. So now you've essentially got it collapsing back in onto itself, collapsing back into the good stuff. In ten years time it'll be largely non-existent, I would imagine.
Conor: By 2020…
Paul: By 2020, you'll have to just implant a chip behind your eye and it'll just be like listening to every band in the world.
Campbell: …at the same time.
Paul: Did you see that thing on BBC4, *A Vision Of The Future*?
Campbell: You should watch it on iPlayer.
Paul: I recommend watching it on iPlayer. I can't tell if it's a joke or not, or if it's serious. But it's this Japanese guy telling us about what's going to happen in the future. Specifically in 2020. 2020 seems to be his standard date. He says stuff in it like "In 2020, people aren't going to know what the word 'traffic jam' means because cars will be automated by microchips and so therefore there'll no longer be any traffic jams." But 2020 is eleven years away. So, that's like saying "When I'm 38 I won't know what the word 'traffic jam' means". It's entirely implausible, that's ludicrous. And he's got a real boner for talking about putting microchips in things. Literally anything. In two separate points he says "You'll have a microchip in your clothes which will be like having a doctor inside your clothes."
Campbell: And he says "So that if you have a heart attack, it will know that you're having a heart attack before you know. And will have rung an ambulance."
Paul: It'll upload it to an ambulance where it'll wait in a queue, like everything else in the world. And the other thing he says is that aspirins will have microchips in them. And it will be like swallowing an entire medical laboratory. Why would that be beneficial?
MRR: I'm guessing there's a reason this guy was granted a programme, and it's probably not because of the accuracy of his predictions.
Campbell: I think it's because the year 2020 has amazing symmetry. Which gives it –
Paul: It sounds deeply futuristic in the way that the year 2001 once sounded deeply futuristic, but we've rocketed past that.
Campbell: And it may also have numerological significance.
Paul: 2012.
MRR: The Olympics.
Paul: The end of the world.
Campbell: I want to say about the Olympics…
MRR: No swimming?
Campbell: No, of course I like swimming as a sport, really. I retract all earlier criticisms. It's one of the most fantastic physical pursuits, or forms of male or female expression.
MRR: Unlike hardcore.
Paul: On that subject we've had a complete duality tonight. That's the Mob Rules experience.
Conor: When it starts off, we sound very antagonistic. But by the end we just want to cater to every –
Paul: We're extremely pliable.
MRR: On that note, I want to eat this burrito I have on my lap, and I don't want this to take forever to transcribe.
Campbell: Can I ask you Nick, what year in the 1980s do you think is the best year for music?
MRR: I'm not going to say because it wouldn't be a meaningful answer. I wouldn't mean it. Well, let's see… *Meat Puppets II* came out in 1983 and that's probably my desert island disc, so I'll say that.
Conor: I thought you liked *Up On The Sun* better?
MRR: No, I think —
Conor: I've been getting really into the later stuff, like *Huevos* and *Mirage*.
MRR: It's not as good. Flatly.
Conor: But it is still good.
MRR: It's good in it's way. If we start talking about The Fall, we could be here all day but *This Nation's Saving Grace* is a really good one. Have you heard that one?
Paul: I have.
MRR: It's a slow-burner and a total banger. And that's '86. And what year did *Perfect Prescription* come out?
Campbell: Well you see, '86, '86… *Age of Quarrel*, *Master of Puppets* and *Reign in Blood*. It's the most brutal year in the history of music.
MRR: Does the fact that it has a six in it and you just mentioned three records have any significance?
Campbell: 2020.
MRR: I would say that every passing year that there are still records coming out that I like, I'm surprised. Because of the music I've liked that's come out this decade, it's barely likely that any of it *couldn't* have come out in a previous decade. I think we're in terminal rehash.
Campbell: There's loads of good records still coming out, you've just got to be happy to search further a field. Like the Paintbox albums that have come out this decade are as good as…
MRR: Are they the group with the woman who dances like this [does impression]?
Paul: Haha, no.
MRR: The one in that grunge documentary.
Paul: Oh, Hammerbox you're thinking of.
MRR: Candlebox?
Paul: You got any more questions for us, Nick?
MRR: Campbell, have any of your students seen you play and commented?
Campbell: To my knowledge, none of my students have seen me play.

Post Scriptum by Conor Rickford

i. As it happens, mere days after the above took place, we were asked to play in the fair city of Nottingham but the above has been preserved for reasons of verity.

ii. It is also important to note that we have a long-standing, mutual respect for our interviewer, Nicholas Jones. Although many are often wont to blur the interviewer/inquisitor boundary, Nicholas employs nothing but tact and charm to sluice away the layers of bullshit and conceit that "artists" bury themselves within. His publication, "Niche Homo", is, in my opinion, the yardstick by which all micro-culture publications must be judged against.

iii. Having subsequently spoken with Thomas Campbell regarding his comments on swimming, he has retracted many of the derogatory statements. For those of you who enjoy what he calls the "unclad sport", he respects your choice and wishes you all the best with your pursuit.

iv. Ben Hirst is a reserved man. Our words are mere house-bricks when set against his cyclopean presence.

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IT'S NOT JUST ENTERTAINMENT: THE LEGACY OF

REALLYRED

Although well admired during the 1980s, Really Red seemed to slip into the dustbins of punk history while Texas acts like the Dicks, MDC, Big Boys, and others maintained steady appeal. The Houston band's mix of jittery art rock, furious and frenetic punk, and homegrown free jazz bursts were uncanny and unique. My own band the Texas Biscuit Bombs, with Randy "Biscuit" Turner formerly at the helm, still covers the chilling tune "Teaching You The Fear." When Biscuit sung, "Try to love another man, get yourself shot dead," the emotion was raw and heartfelt.

In Left of the Dial *#7, I ran a lengthy interview with U-Ron Bondage, the detail-driven, roar-voiced singer. For this interview, I wanted to present a different point of view. People turned their heads down when I mentioned John Paul Williams, the politically conservative bass player. I thought punk was an umbrella genre big enough for Dave Smalley and Jello Biafra. When I asked Really Red drummer Bob Weber (who didn't want to be interviewed) his opinion, he was upfront and unapologetic. Talk to him: the politics shouldn't dissuade you.*

The members of the band have been very generous, providing me vivid ephemera, which I made available to the public at: www.reallyredtx.wordpress.com. If you have materials that you could contribute, or would like a copy of Left of the Dial*, please drop me a line at: leftofthedialmag@hotmail.com. In the meantime, rumor says that Alternative Tentacles has Really Red re-issues lined up!*

Intro and interview by David Ensminger

MRR: John Paul, tell me about your roots in the Texas punk scene.

John Paul: We start with me being kicked out of Boys Harbor in LaPorte, Texas in 1969 for sneaking off and refusing to be disciplined. I had been on the boxing team and told the director that I would hit him back if he thought he would give me "pops." The director was an ex-heavyweight boxer from Germany, and he could've have really kicked my butt. The form of discipline was to lean over his desk, and he would hit you as hard as he could with a paddle made of wood. Y'know, a custom job that had holes in it so it would make a wooshing sound before it hit your butt. It was not unusual to draw blood during disciplinary sessions there. I had spent most of my youth incarcerated but not because I was a juvenile delinquent. My family lived all over the world, including Iran, and my father walked away from eight kids.

I was sent to Mount Sacred Heart Military Academy in San Antonio in 1960. I thought, "What the heck did I do to deserve this?" I was also sent to St. Mary's Orphanage in Galveston, Texas in 1961, the year of Hurricane Carla, and through Boy's Harbor in La Porte, Texas until I was 17. I used to go to Christmas for a few days with a family I never met. I used to get socks and pajamas at Christmas. I slopped hogs every morning for nearly five years. After all of that, and the story could be much longer, I ended up in a one room garage apartment in Montrose with my very eccentric brother Tinker where I was exposed to all things nefarious and cool. The backgrounds of the individuals who were part of the early scene of Montrose are important because that is where it all started for me. Montrose was the Greenwich Village of Texas. The beatnik, jazz, pot smoking, LSD movement was alive and well.

Kelly and Ronnie lived in Bellaire during those years and Kelly went to University of Houston. Kelly was part of the Chenevert Street Gang and worked at "Freaky Foods" (aka Richwood Food Market.) where my brothers, sisters, and I would get our 2 a.m. munching food. Everyone went to Love Street Light Circus and downtown in the warehouse district and hung out at Market Square.

The MC5 actually played at a club named Of Our Own on University and Kirby Drive in the heart of West University. We hung out with them after the show. They were pretty wild and crazy guys and what a band. It was the only time I've ever seen two guitar players throw their guitars to each other mid-song without missing a beat.

We saw the 13th Floor Elevators, New York Dolls at Liberty Hall, the Kinks, Springsteen, the Who, the Stones, Genesis with Peter Gabriel. I was at the Dallas Pop Festival in 1969, which was nuts. I think my greatest influence was the Kinks. I've always loved songs that tell a story, and Ray Davies was a master at that. I also liked the Kinks because Ray and Dave Davies used to fight a lot and stayed together. There was a great band in Montrose called the Montrose Marching Band that was so good at covering Kinks songs that they got to play

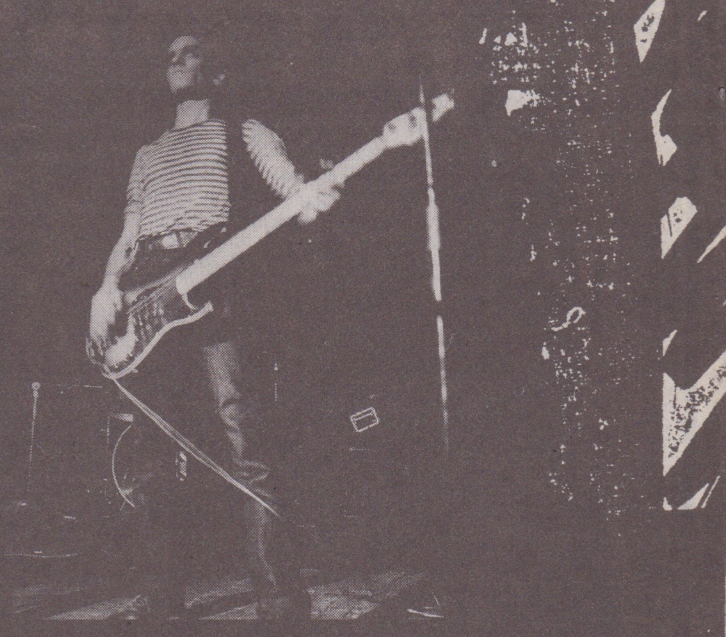
in front of Ray Davies at their hotel. Our band was a little like that. The musical influences of the day were a big part of our effort. The first incarnation of Really Red was a band named A Fine Madness. We were a bunch of young kids figuring out how to play and did some jamming and started learning some songs. I think we played a gig or two and cut our teeth back in those days. We then became China. I don't know how that happened, but it was probably Ronnie who thought that up. He has always been somewhat of a Marxist, and I went along with a lot of that stuff because I really didn't care. I guess I thought it was cool at the time.

MRR: I understand that you, Ronnie, and Kelly lived in a series of old houses in the heart of Montrose. I know even Gary Floyd was experiencing some seedy moments in the neighborhood during the early 1970s.

John Paul: Montrose was my home. We had fabulous and crazy times at our houses known as Crocker Street, Yupon House, and West Main. I walked those streets every day and night. I'd walk to Birraporetti's and write lyrics while drinking Irish whiskeys and get free happy hour pizza. Montrose was my stomping grounds. My brothers and sisters went to school there, and I went to Lamar for one year. I was living in the middle of the whole thing—staying up all night, walking to Richwood Food Market also known as Freaky Foods (Kelly worked there) on the corner of Richmond and Dunlavy. Ronnie and my brother Tinker were pretty tight and both very radical in their political views. I remember Tinker and Ronnie both to be people who hated the establishment and were more inclined to be like the Weather Underground and into Che Guevera and Socialist/Marxist ideologies. Ronnie has been like that as long as I've known him. I had been raised in a very conservative and disciplined style, which meant getting up at 5:30, slopping hogs, being bussed to public school, coming back to the Harbor, doing farm chores, homework, go to bed, get up, and do it over again day after day, year after year. I guess I grew up much more conservative. I guess I actually lived the gulag life, and I was a farmboy thrust into a hippie world.

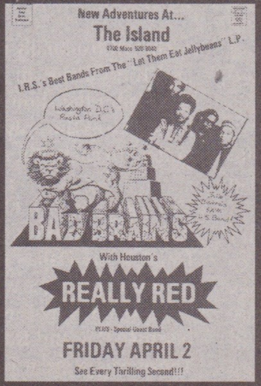
When I began my journey in music, it was with an old bass with gut strings. I never took a lesson. I put on records and learned how to tune and figure out chords. I actually wanted to be a lead guitar player, but everyone seemed to want to play guitar, and the egos were so big. I decided to become a bass player. My mentors were John Entwistle and Chris Squire because their styles were flamboyant. It was when Bob Marley happened on the scene that my bass tone and attitude changed. Where I thought I would be a lead guitar player on bass, I then decided I'd rather alter people's heartbeat with my bass tones, like the Wailers did with me. I still liked playing fast but more in the lower register from then on.

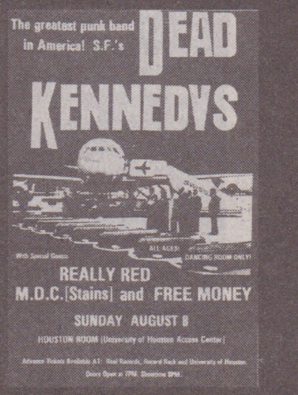
Ronnie, his girlfriend Bonnie, and were at the Houston Music Hall performance of Bob Marley. We were some of the only white people there, but it was a fantastic show with everyone dancing at the end. Back then codeine was in. Robitussin. There were Robitussin bottles all over the place after that show. It was a cultural thing, and I wasn't used to that way of getting high. Montrose was where the action was.



As friends, we would hang out in Montrose and downtown at Love Street. You had everything from Liberty Hall, the Banditos, Urban Animals, parties, and craziness. It was the post free love Hippie thing. SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), the Chicago 7, Abbie Hoffman, and all those radicals were running around trying to tear down the government. It's funny that people like Bill Ayers and Jeff Jones of the Weather Underground are buddies of Obama. A lot of the socialist, Maoist, Marxist characters of the time are actually czars in the Obama administration. Van Jones and Jeff Jones of the Weather Underground are getting millions of our tax dollars by their association with Obama. Jeff Jones, who heads the Apollo Project, actually wrote the stimulus bill, according to Harry Reid. It looks like we're headed down the road to socialism, especially when you count Mao as one of your mentors. He only killed 72 million people in peacetime.

Anyhow, Ronnie, Kelly, and I started off living together on West Main and Mandell where we started our band. We all had jobs. I started marking steel at the docks with Ronnie. I ended up working for that company for nearly seven years, clearing shipments through US Customs with hair down my back. I ended up cutting my hair when I got arrested for driving my Triumph 650 motorcycle with my license





suspended and spent fourteen hours in the Houston Police Department drunk tank. The judge (Billy Reagan) told me the next day I would go to jail for three days unless I cut my hair. I saw a guy get beat unconscious right in front of me. I thought he was going to die. It was a scary moment in my life, and I realized at that time that jail was not going to be a place I would visit again and I haven't (thank God). Prison isn't my style. I'd already spent most of my life incarcerated, so that angle was not a good idea. I still suggest you angry young people realize that what you are angry about might just be your own reluctance to be self-responsible. You want to be part of some real change? Root out corruption and fraud and quit thinking the government will take care of you. They only want power over you and your money. Be a stand-up person and develop strong ideals. Stop whining that the world won't take care of you. It's just the way it is. Under a socialist system, you'll never know true prosperity unless you are one of the "chosen few."

MRR: By the time the Ramones ventured through at Liberty Hall, did you feel like this was a national kind of musical movement, or did it seem just like another rock 'n' roll band with a twist?

John Paul: The Ramones were the *first punk band*. The great thing I liked about the Ramones is that they were uniquely American, New York, cool, and a very tight four piece band. They had the same setup with bass drums and guitar as Really Red. I actually think we were a Texas version of the Ramones except that Ronnie's lyrical style was more like Johnny Rotten and anti-establishment ranting, but that was his style and his contribution to the band. He always had a lot to say. Anyone who know Ronnie knows that he can talk for hours, and you'll sit there and listen. Regarding the music of our time, Ronnie was one of the most knowledgeable people in the country. How he is now? I wouldn't know as we don't communicate anymore. That's another story. We went in different directions, and I'm very happy with the direction I went in. I still play guitar and occasionally sit in with some friends. I tell people that I am a professional doodler. I can play along with any band and an Ipod.

REALLY RED

Houston's REALLY RED

Really Red

MRR: Tell us about China, the cover band that included most of Really Red and featured songs by Dave Clark Five and Roxy Music? This ended up being a link to meeting Bob, the drummer?

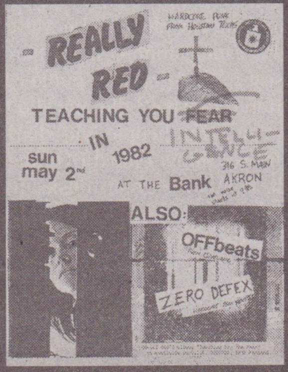
John Paul: China was an experiment in doing songs we liked. We were varied in our approach with Roxy Music but also King Crimson, Kinks, and other copy songs. We might have done Petula Clark's "Downtown," which (I think) was on our first record and might have been popular for its hardcore treatment—the way we did it [ed: the song was released posthumously on a single]. I think we got tired of not doing our own material. We jammed a lot and started coming up with riffs. Yes, we had different drummers, but for some reason they were all not very reliable or had really great ideas about their own self worth. Bob walked in very different than the others. He had great technical ability, and we simply miked him to make his sound bigger.

MRR: Ronnie once told me, "We learned a lot from Legionnaire's Disease's (local notorious punk band) attitude and approach to self-promotion." Do you feel this way as well?

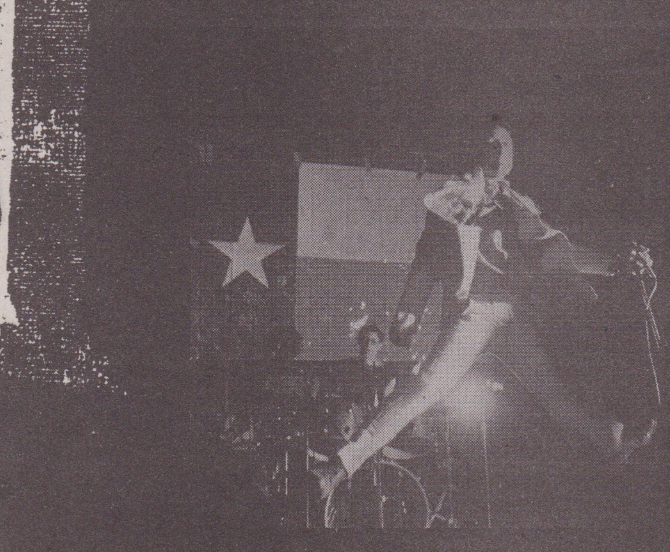
John Paul: Sure, I thought they broke new ground when it came to outrageous behavior on stage and they deserve their place in Houston's music history. I was not into the fact that they were into hard drugs and needles though. I wasn't as much into their out of control stuff, but I was probably in the minority on that. Jerry Anomie was a nice guy, and I liked him, but was not that into the band as much as Ronnie. But they were an important part of the scene. The Butthole Surfers were just kids at that time and used to open for us at different gigs.

We definitely learned about self-promotion. Really Red was probably one of the early bands that realized that we could promote our own records by sending out 45s to college radio stations. We would get play lists back and design our tours around those schools that played our records. In today's digital world it is very easy to cut your own CD's. Back then it was a studio. We went from 8 tracks to 16 tracks to 32 tracks etc. We had a great time—we were all friends for many years, and some of us stay in contact once in a while.

MRR: Bob explained that the band played to the edge of its musical limits, which gave the band a unique sound. Who were the members pushing the sound into new areas?



John Paul: Actually, a good question. Ronnie brought attitude, lots of opinion, and lyrics. Since we were a three-piece musically, we jammed until we came up with riffs. Either Kelly or I would come up with a line, and we would play with it for hours. It was typical for us to be finished with a song prior to lyrics being added, so there was plenty of time to mess around. Kelly was an extremely good guitar player, reminiscent of Pete Townsend's style. Bob was a very accurate drummer. He and I would concentrate on our beats so we had a tight mix. Bass and drums laid out the rhythm, and Kelly would come in on top and make it musical. Nobody better for my money. I wish we had video of some of our better shows.



I think we had diverse tastes, but we also came together on a lot of musical styles. We would listen to George Jones, Merle Haggard, Waylon & Willie, David Alan Coe, and others. We also listened to the Ramones, Clash (I was never a Mick Jones fan though), Sex Pistols, and many other hardcore bands. We listened to English bands too numerous to mention. We listened to reggae. I always liked Van Morrison, Stevie Ray, Boz Scaggs, old stuff like Tony Bennett, Sinatra and many, many others. Ronnie would make some fantastic compilation tapes (yes tapes, remember those?) for our tours, so we had a great DJ in him. We all made them, but Ronnie probably had the greatest due to his record store collection and the hours he spent within the music record business.

MRR: The early tours seem quite a blur, I suppose, but I know the band played a store in Portland and the weird basement Tool and Die in Frisco, and might have been kicked off a bill by Black Flag. Did you relish such moments, in the very DIY/anything goes style of punk I suppose, or were you ever disappointed with such an odd assortment of places and egos of the underground world?

John Paul: For my part, I never concerned myself with being noticed by the "establishment" of the hardcore world. Ronnie was probably the closest to that group of punker business people. None of them ever mattered to what I did, nor did they ever show that in return. It was great meeting people and sharing certain bonds, but everyone did their own thing. i liked DOA the best out of all the bands we played with. DOA were great musicians and non-pretentious in my view. I don't remember why we were kicked off a bill with Black Flag. If we did, it was more their problem than ours.

We played a lot of odd places and with different bands from Nick Lowe to SPK. We played bars in Louisiana. We played the Midwest, we played the American Legion Hall in Reno, and UC Davis after being up all night drinking at the casinos in Reno. We also had great gigs and held our own very well with the Dead Kennedys, DOA, and others. Bottom line is I relished all of it: the good, the bad, and the ugly. Nobody in Really Red was in charge. We all played hard, had our share of arguments, but when it came time to be on stage we were in agreement: do it the best you can, and take it all the way. We were a band that typically played for over an hour non-stop, and people liked that. I never really thought of us as punk. We were rockers, and we liked to play loud and fast. Everyone else called us punk. I think the most appropriate term for our style was cow punk.

Because Really Red was all four of us, the band could not exist without all four of us. The band died in 1984. Maybe that's fitting now that the real Big Brother is watching over all of us. It turns out that the Marxists and Communists (aka Progressives of both parties) in our own government are destroying the American way of life. I was told once by a judge that I would go to jail for not cutting my hair by the time he left his chambers. I went ahead and cut that hair but swore that I would never let "the establishment" control my life. At that time it was the police and the corporations that were coming down on me, but the greed and thirst for power of this government is truly massive. The present thirst for power among "elitists" from music to politics crosses all boundaries. The leftists in power right now were probably supported by the "punks" out of their hatred for Bush, but in return they are having their rights and freedoms taken away by Obama. The days of big government and victim entitlement are upon us, and those jealous of successful people are choking the life out of this country because they think they "deserve" what other people have. The plan of redistribution will make us a Third World country. I stand up against that. Government should leave me alone to make it or break it. I don't want what you have, and I want you to stay out of my way. Quit taxing the hell out of me and get off my back.

MRR: For me, one of the great themes of the band was puncturing the myth of rock, epitomized in tunes like "Entertainment" and "Prostitution." But did you agree with the band not opening for the Clash, or was that, in hindsight, a lost opportunity?

John Paul: We did stand up for our ideals. However, it would have been awesome playing Hoffheinz Pavillion in Houston with the Clash. We were given a great opportunity for exposure and, in hindsight, I should've argued that we should play the gig for our own benefit and screw the Clash's ego. We were also offered a pittance to play, but y'know, it would've been historic now that people are still asking about Really Red and what we did. Was it our own egos that got in the way? Maybe we should have kicked some ass just for the fun of it and taken names later.

MRR: Now that Alternative Tentacles may re-issue the back catalog, what do you recall about your gigs with the DKs, and how "Prostitution" ended up on the cornerstone *Let Them Eat Jellybeans* comp, quickly selling over 10,000 copies?

John Paul: I have no idea how "Prostitution" ended up being on that record but I would've picked a different song; something a lot faster like "Suburban Disease." Our gigs with the DK's were always awesome because we measured up well with them. In Houston, at least, we were a force to be reckoned with. I think the song was picked more for the lyrics than being representative of our overall sound.

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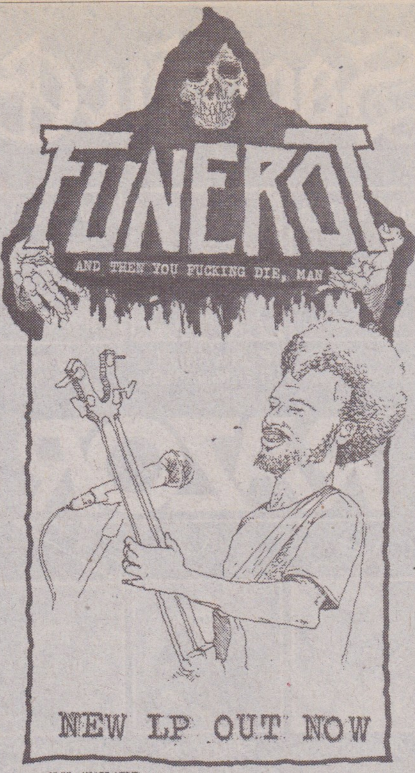

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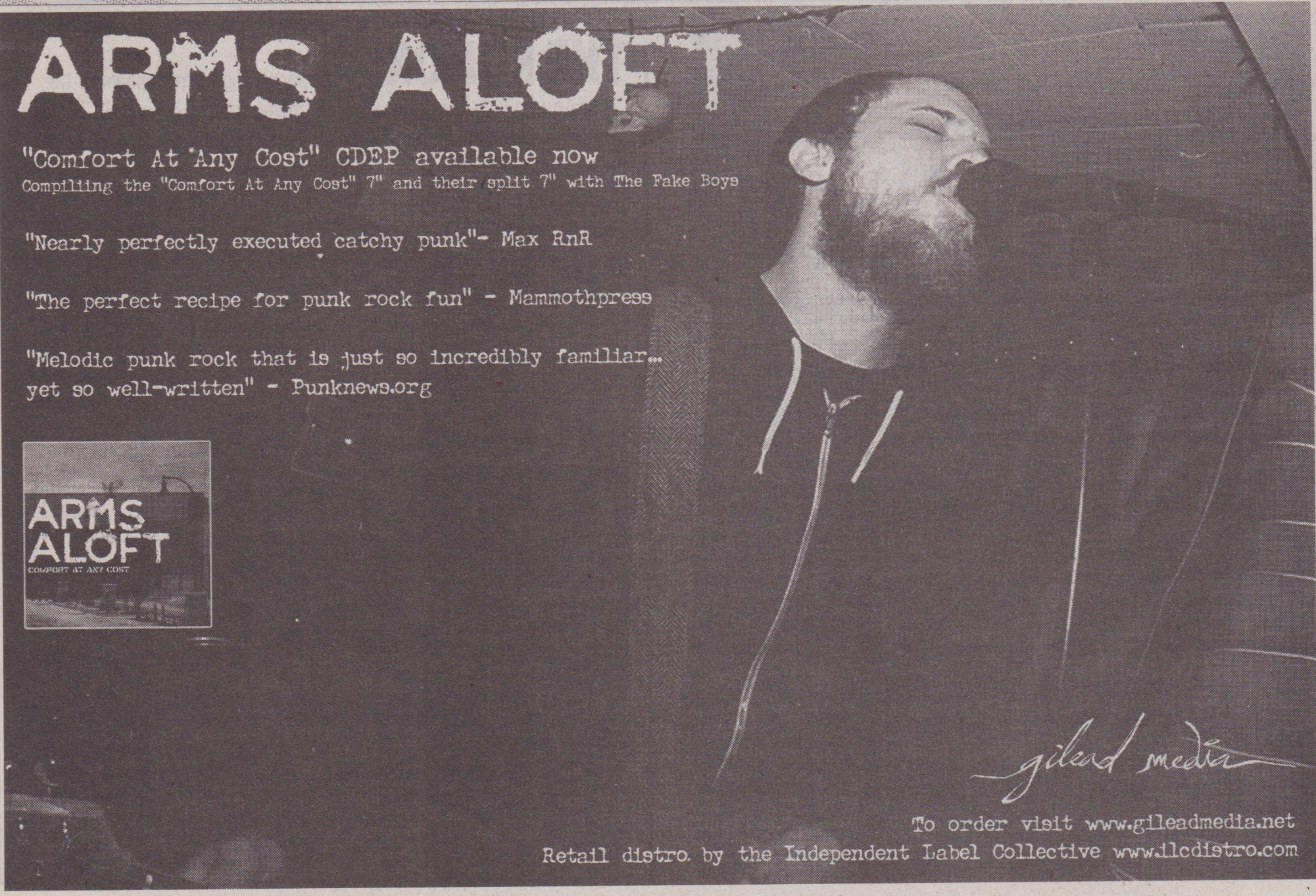

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THE RUMOR:

In pre-punk 1974, there was a legendary proto-punk band from Cleveland, Ohio called **Rocket From The Tombs.** Only lasting a year and issuing no recordings, they spawned the members of what would become **Pere Ubu** and the **Dead Boys.** Imagine what kind of band you'd have if you combined the two into one—That was RFTT!

THE REALITY:

Some tapes existed and Smog Veil Records issued the best of them in 2002—27 years later—as **"The Day The Earth Met The Rocket From The Tombs."** Not in 1974, not in 2002, did ANYTHING sound like THIS.

THE RE-EMERGENCE:

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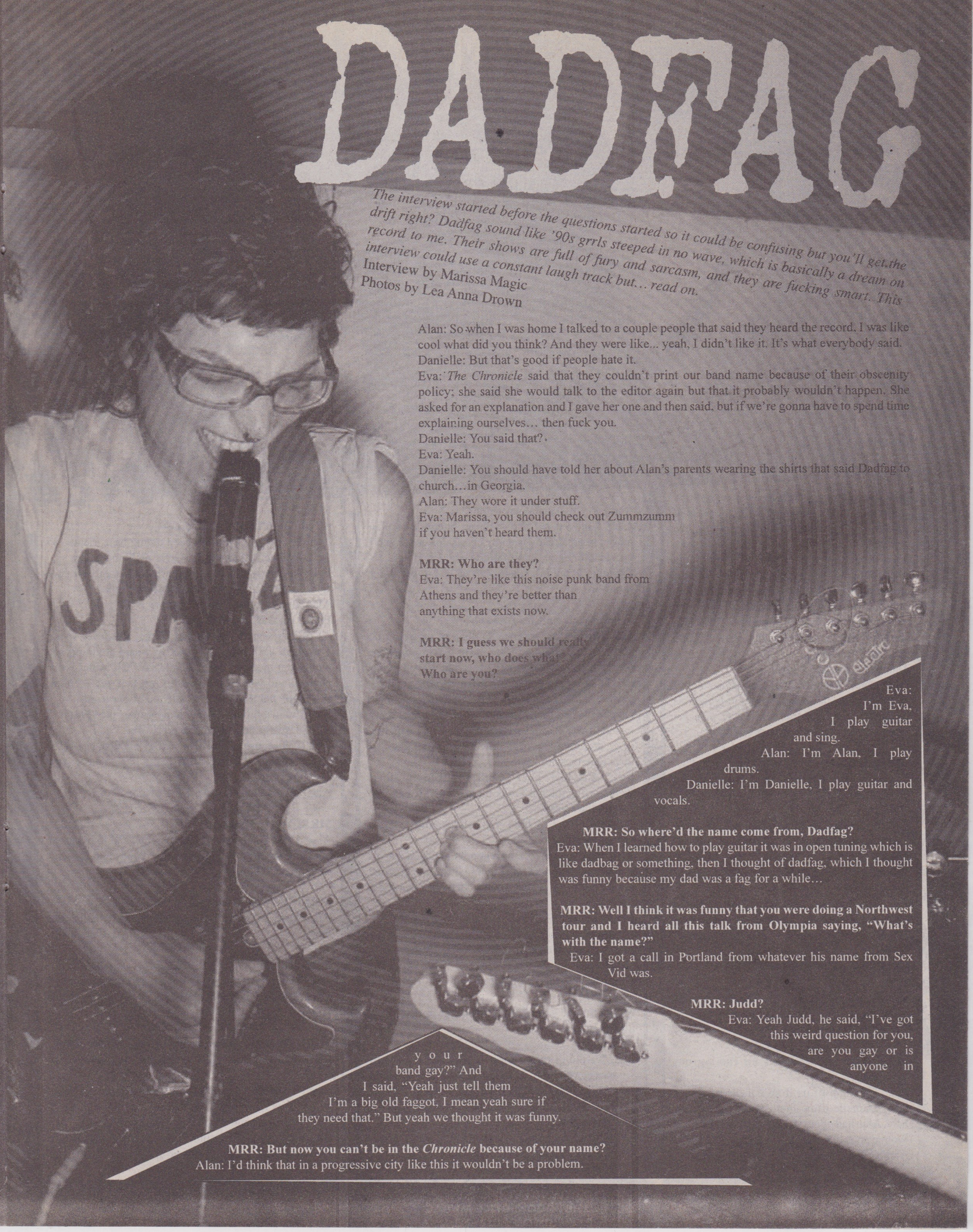


DADFAG

The interview started before the questions started so it could be confusing but you'll get the drift right? Dadfag sound like '90s grrls steeped in no wave, which is basically a dream on record to me. Their shows are full of fury and sarcasm, and they are fucking smart. This interview could use a constant laugh track but... read on.

Interview by Marissa Magic
Photos by Lea Anna Drown

Alan: So when I was home I talked to a couple people that said they heard the record. I was like cool what did you think? And they were like... yeah, I didn't like it. It's what everybody said.
Danielle: But that's good if people hate it.
Eva: *The Chronicle* said that they couldn't print our band name because of their obscenity policy; she said she would talk to the editor again but that it probably wouldn't happen. She asked for an explanation and I gave her one and then said, but if we're gonna have to spend time explaining ourselves... then fuck you.
Danielle: You said that?
Eva: Yeah.
Danielle: You should have told her about Alan's parents wearing the shirts that said Dadfag to church...in Georgia.
Alan: They wore it under stuff.
Eva: Marissa, you should check out Zummzumm if you haven't heard them.

MRR: Who are they?
Eva: They're like this noise punk band from Athens and they're better than anything that exists now.

MRR: I guess we should really start now, who does what? Who are you?
Eva: I'm Eva, I play guitar and sing.
Alan: I'm Alan, I play drums.
Danielle: I'm Danielle, I play guitar and vocals.

MRR: So where'd the name come from, Dadfag?
Eva: When I learned how to play guitar it was in open tuning which is like dadbag or something, then I thought of dadfag, which I thought was funny because my dad was a fag for a while...

MRR: Well I think it was funny that you were doing a Northwest tour and I heard all this talk from Olympia saying, "What's with the name?"
Eva: I got a call in Portland from whatever his name from Sex Vid was.

MRR: Judd?
Eva: Yeah Judd, he said, "I've got this weird question for you, are you gay or is anyone in your band gay?" And I said, "Yeah just tell them I'm a big old faggot, I mean yeah sure if they need that." But yeah we thought it was funny.

MRR: But now you can't be in the *Chronicle* because of your name?
Alan: I'd think that in a progressive city like this it wouldn't be a problem.

Eva: The issue is exactly because of that.
Alan: It's just a weird thing, I'd assume if you're gay or lesbian you'd want it to mean nothing.
Eva: Like Limpwrist, what if their name was Limpfag or something? They'd still be a really great awesome band, they're a hardcore fag band and proud of it, it just seems like the most progressive of the fags are back into the idea of taking the word and erasing its meaning.
Danielle: By using it, yeah.
Eva: Once it enters into the vernacular it doesn't have the weight that it would as an insult, it's like the same way you get desensitized to the word fuck or shit.

MRR: It's pretty dependent on context.
Eva: Like anything deemed derogatory, like dyke or pansy can't be used

MRR: You mean in the *Chronicle*? They can't use pansy?
Eva: Yeah!
Danielle: What if you're having a flower show?
Eva: But I mean I'm not trying to use it in a derogatory way, I'm not trying to be offensive… I'm trying to offend the squares!

MRR: So you're all from the South?
Band: Yeah.
Eva: Alan and I grew up in Georgia; Danielle grew up in LA and Alabama and went to school in Georgia where we all met.

MRR: How did you end up coming out here then?
Eva: The eight of us from Athens came out here, Danielle came first, then I moved out here, Alan had gone on tour with Long Legged Woman out here, and then Justin joked that Alan could play drums for us and I was like Alan, do you wanna play drums?
Alan: I moved out here with no intention to play music, I had already been in a bunch of bands and I was kind of done, I don't know why I said yes.
Danielle: I couldn't stand and you had to take your shoes off.

MRR: Wait, wait wait what?
Eva: For the first practice so none of us would be nervous, Danielle and I had been playing together for a while but neither one of us had played guitar in a band before so we were like nervous to show anyone, so we took all these painkillers.
Danielle: I had fucked up my wrist at work and my manager was like take these drugs! And I was like okay, and then I went to practice and was like hey guys take these drugs—
Eva: I was like "Fuck yeah!" But then my shoes were hurting me but I took them off and walked all around the Mission.
Danielle: I had to hold my belly button to keep myself standing.
Alan: I remember it being a good practice, it wasn't really awkward, like most times with a first practice it's like oh, uh… that sounds like you can keep time…
Eva: It sounds like you know how to drum.
Alan: But I didn't know what to expect with these two, I didn't even really know what I was getting into.
Danielle: And then we trapped you.

MRR: So you guys knew each other in the South and then came here?
Alan: No.
Eva: We didn't really know each other at all until we moved out here. I kind of moved out here on a whim being like "I hope Danielle is cool!"
Danielle: And then you slept on my air mattress for multiple months.
Eva: It was one month.

MRR:
So you didn't know each other?
Danielle: No we had both been dating best friends, so we knew each other, but we never really hung out.
Eva: Definitely not independently and even when we were in the same room we didn't really talk.
Alan: Eva and I weren't friends.
Eva: Alan was scared of me.
Alan: You scared the shit out of me, we never spoke a word to each other, I figured if I said anything she would tear me apart, like I would say "Oh, what's your name?" and you would just rip my face off…I think that really helped craft the dynamic of our band.
Eva: I'm just hitting him with my guitar like "Faster!"
Alan: Usually they tell me to go slower.
Eva: It's because you're always playing blast beats, I'll be hitting you with my guitar being like "You're fired asshole!"
Alan: my parents kicked me out of a band once.

MRR: Your parents?
Alan: I was in a band with my parents, and they kicked me out because I was in four other bands and I wasn't spending enough time on their band.

MRR: Did that make things awkward?
Alan: Yeah, I didn't show up to dinner for a while after that.

MRR: No dinner?
Alan: I stopped letting them cook for me, it was kind of a weird blow…I actually got kicked out of two bands then…

MRR: Okay, so Allen you've been in bands before, I know this is Danielle's first band, how about you Eva?
Eva: I've been in a couple bands. I was in an emo band when I was in high school, and my dad played music, and I was in a band with some friends in Athens. Then I learned how to play guitar because my friend Parker needed a baritone guitar player in his band, I was like

"Let's figure this out." We lived together at the time, it was fun, and I wasn't any good at it. I can do it now, but at the time…

MRR: How are your guitars tuned? Because they sound really crazy.
Danielle: I'm regular.
Eva: Hers is standard and mine is just drop D… well it's DADFsharpAA, but I hardly use the higher strings, so it sounds like just drop D pretty much.
Danielle: We just play guitar really really weirdly, especially together.

MRR: It sounds really dissonant a lot of the time.
Danielle: Yeah.
Eva: It's because we think it sounds good.

MRR: I was thinking about the review I did for the record and how it sounds fucked up but that's the way I like music? Like all my reviews always say—this is off time and out of tune and it's perfect!
Eva: Alan and I just showed up at the same record store at the same time, and I was like "What are you doing here?" And he was just like, "Oh I gotta check out *Maximum* our record is reviewed in it."
Danielle: I thought it was incredibly accurate.

MRR: I was worried because I dissed the recording.
Eva: Well the vocals were way too low in the first mix, so we turned them up and then I think that when they mastered it they boosted them even more. They were where I wanted them but I guess people who think they know about these sorts of things turned it up.

MRR: Yeah I think there is a tendency to turn vocals up; I like them when they're kind of on the same level.
Eva: Yeah, because vocals are fucking stupid no one ever has anything to say. Unless it's like a personal song but then it's something that could be sung to yourself or something.

MRR: But with your lyrics I've noticed a lot of the time that they're pronounced in this way where they could mean five different things. Like at the end of that Huggy Bear song where he's singing "does it make you more a pig if you wanna off a kid/does it make you more a kid if you wanna off a pig" and after awhile you can't tell if he's saying kid or pig?
Eva: In writing I really appreciate things that have more than one meaning, like double entendres or insinuations that lead to depth in the meaning, you know especially when you're trying to write lyrics and poetry and shit. Because everything has been said, and you have to make it beautiful and as deep as possible in order to really do anything worthwhile.
Danielle: I also think it's really fun to—it's kind of like a puzzle, you write something and then you're trying to fit it in to the music you have, and you really have to knock things out, and it kind of changes the meaning and then you can also fuck around with the intonation of your singing, and that too, that changes everything too.
Eva: Because people are going to take from it what they want, when you're making art for the public people are going to interpret it in many different ways, people are going to like it or not, I kind of feel like I'm covering my bases so no one comes out of left field and is like "Why'd you say that?" and then it's just "I didn't think about that at all!" I like to know all the possible meanings so I know what I'm saying.
Danielle: It's also funny to write something about someone and then they come to your show and you can sing it at them, I do that a lot, like right straight at them.

MRR: What are you trying to do?
Eva: Fucking get paid man… have you heard of this 7"? The Whines?

MRR: *Insane Okay*?
Eva: Yeah.

MRR: That one is so good!
Eva: They have a record done and they're coming here in March.
Danielle: I know when we started the band we were really angry, and that was really the only thing that made it better.
Eva: It's just a thing for me, like we haven't practiced in a while and I feel fucking nuts.
Danielle: It's just a physical and mental and like everything way to emote.
Eva: It's a really good outlet.
Danielle: And also you can meet all these people that are doing the same thing.
Alan: I feel it's the first band ever. It's really comfortable and it's not a weird… we don't have an agenda really, we're just having fun.
Danielle: We have so much fun.
Eva: We just never care if we piss someone off and we're always on the same page and shit, we just wanna have fun.
Alan: It's like I expected nothing of the band, and by far this is the most successful thing I've been a part of, it's really great. I don't have to put anything into it.
Eva: You get to ride on the coattails of some beautiful women.
Alan: It's one of the most fantastic things ever.
Danielle: All you need is someone sucking your dick.

MRR: While you're playing.
Eva: There are vegans who won't have sex with non-vegans.

MRR: Are they afraid of the meat juice?
Danielle: Most people are sticking their dicks in pieces of meat.
Eva: I definitely stick my dick in pieces of meat.
Danielle: What else should we talk about?
Eva: We could talk about how Nazi-feministic we are.
Alan: What's the angle for this interview, anyways?

MRR: That's actually really funny because the other day I was at the Jump off a Building show at Thrillhouse and Layla was telling me about overhearing a group of dudes reading the interview I did with Broken Water—"What's with all this feminist shit?" I felt like I had won a prize or something.
Eva: That rules.

MRR: Well, Alan was talking about it just being fun and not really about anything, but is it political?
Eva: Well we have our personal politics that come through, just how people interact with us, like we don't put up with any shit.

MRR: But lyrics wise?
Eva: Not political in the sense of world or national politics, I definitely think Western civilization is completely fucked, humanity has gone to shit and everything is beyond… beyond. But I feel like that's so obvious it's not even worth talking about anymore. Everywhere I've ever been, whether it's like the South, where things like this might be more thought of as normally occurring, every major city I've been to, every place I've been to I get fucking yelled at. I get called a faggot, get called a bitch and get people coming up to me asking me, "How much?" every fucking day three times a day at least. Sometimes it's so disturbing it's made me cry because it's too fucking much and just because I look weird. The less weird I look the more I get called a woman…in a derogatory sense…the more weird I look I get called a fag.

MRR: Yeah, like even when I'm having an amazing day, someone will…one time I had a guy be like "Ah mama, you make my dick so hard."
Danielle: And it was like the middle of the day.

MRR: Yeah! And it just informs your entire worldview sometimes.
Danielle: I was walking down the street the other day, right by my house, wearing pants and a fucking t-shirt in the middle of the afternoon, and there were these guys walking behind me, like seriously right fucking behind me talking about my body, and I turned around and was like "Fuck you guys" and then they immediately started talking trash about my body, like "Well we thought your ass was fat anyways."
Eva: Like, a) that's gonna matter to me that you're—
Danielle: Yeah that they were like "Oh, you so fine" and then suddenly like fuck you.
Eva: Men always get really really really offended.
Danielle: Yeah, all the sudden it's like "What the fuck crazy bitch!?"
Eva: You know the fact that I am anything more than an object, the fact that I am forcing them to interact with me means that I'm a crazy bitch because I'm a woman… to the point that deep in the punk scene it's like what the fuck is this shit and nobody even talks about it and riot grrl is starting to get sold off.

MRR: There was this thing in some magazine that was like "How to do your makeup like a riot grrl" Everything gets commodified at some point.
Eva: That's definitely true…but I mean gay rights are still openly discussed, but women's rights…like making equal pay in the workplace? Fuck the workplace…that's not the measure of equality.
Danielle: All the stuff that I write about, all my personal experiences, pissed offness or happiness, when you play a show…I've finally gotten to this point where I can look or scream or feel or say whatever I want, not even thinking about who's watching us.
Eva: Like that self-consciousness is gone.
Danielle: Yeah, like I could never have gotten that way five years ago, but now I'm feeling something in front of an audience and then one girl will come up and say "That was so fucking awesome, to see you guys doing that."
Eva: Not sucking someone's dick or something.

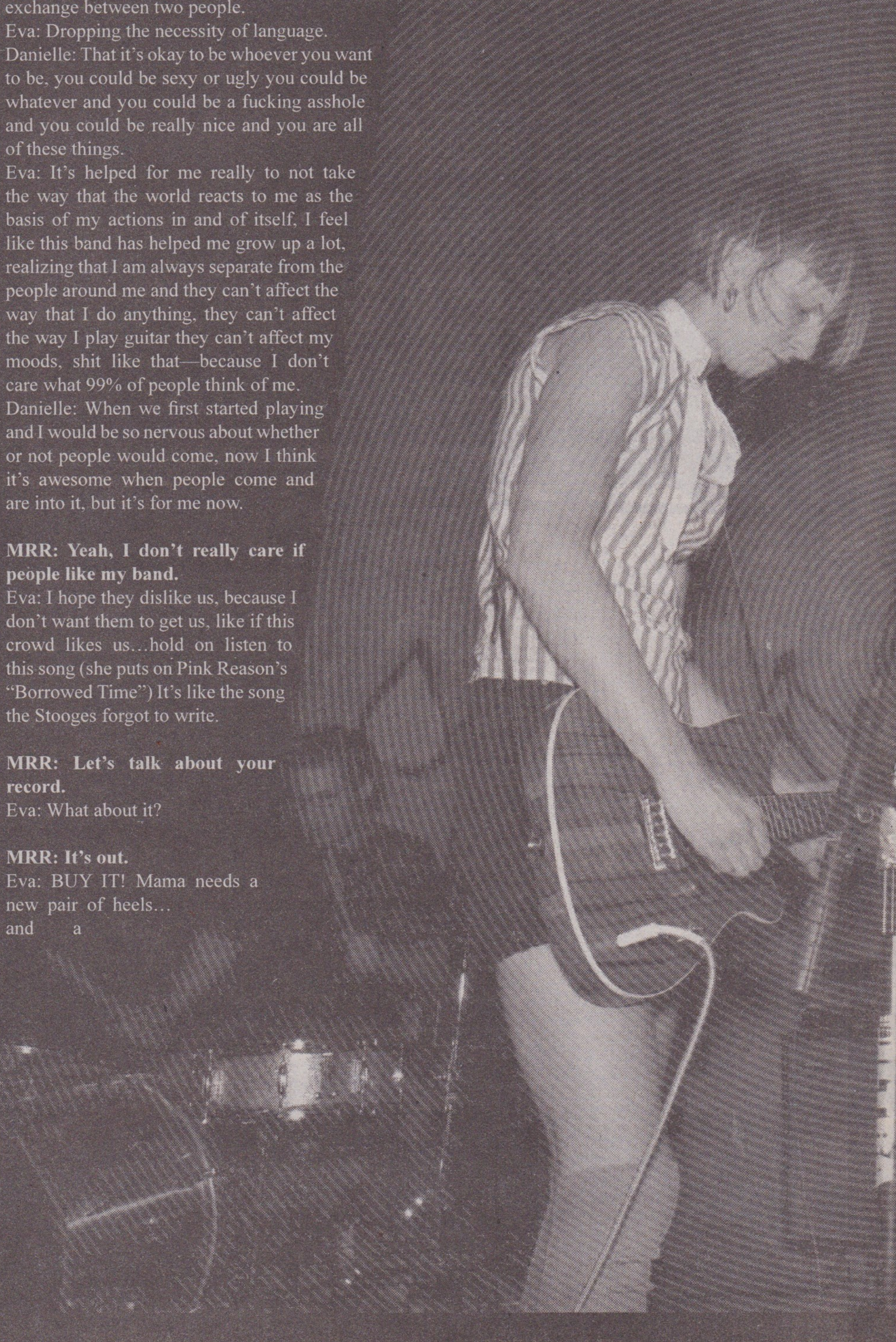
MRR: Not playing a tambourine.
Danielle: Being exactly what you feel and are, it makes you want to play music and that means something to me that is like a change and an exchange between two people.
Eva: Dropping the necessity of language.
Danielle: That it's okay to be whoever you want to be, you could be sexy or ugly you could be whatever and you could be a fucking asshole and you could be really nice and you are all of these things.
Eva: It's helped for me really to not take the way that the world reacts to me as the basis of my actions in and of itself, I feel like this band has helped me grow up a lot, realizing that I am always separate from the people around me and they can't affect the way that I do anything, they can't affect the way I play guitar they can't affect my moods, shit like that—because I don't care what 99% of people think of me.
Danielle: When we first started playing and I would be so nervous about whether or not people would come, now I think it's awesome when people come and are into it, but it's for me now.

MRR: Yeah, I don't really care if people like my band.
Eva: I hope they dislike us, because I don't want them to get us, like if this crowd likes us…hold on listen to this song (she puts on Pink Reason's "Borrowed Time") It's like the song the Stooges forgot to write.

MRR: Let's talk about your record.
Eva: What about it?

MRR: It's out.
Eva: BUY IT! Mama needs a new pair of heels… and a Perrier shower.
Danielle: We played this show and this really awesome dude thought we were interesting enough to put the record out.
Eva: I don't know why, we played this weird art show, and the person who put it on worked at Rainbow and the Broken Rekids guy also worked at Rainbow and he was like "I wanna put your record out" and we were like "We just so happen to have this record."

MRR: So you recorded and then met the guy.
Alan: We didn't even really know who he was.
Danielle: He had to write us like three times.
Alan: We didn't even respond for a while.
Eva: We had some friends in Portland who were going to do it, but it became more and more apparent that it was going to take a long time, but I don't think we're ever going to get anyone else to record us except our really good friends. I don't like the studio sound.



Alan: Yeah.
Eva: Nothing is present everything sounds far away.
Alan: We just did some new recordings.
Eva: They sound like how we're supposed to sound, more like the way it sounds in my head. It involves all that graininess and distortion…you know?
Danielle: When we listened to it.
Eva: We were kind of at a low point.
Danielle: And it was just like "This makes me so excited about my fucking band!"
Eva: It was a moment of we're not really sure why we're doing this and then we listened to the recording and it was like "Oh yeah this fucking rules."

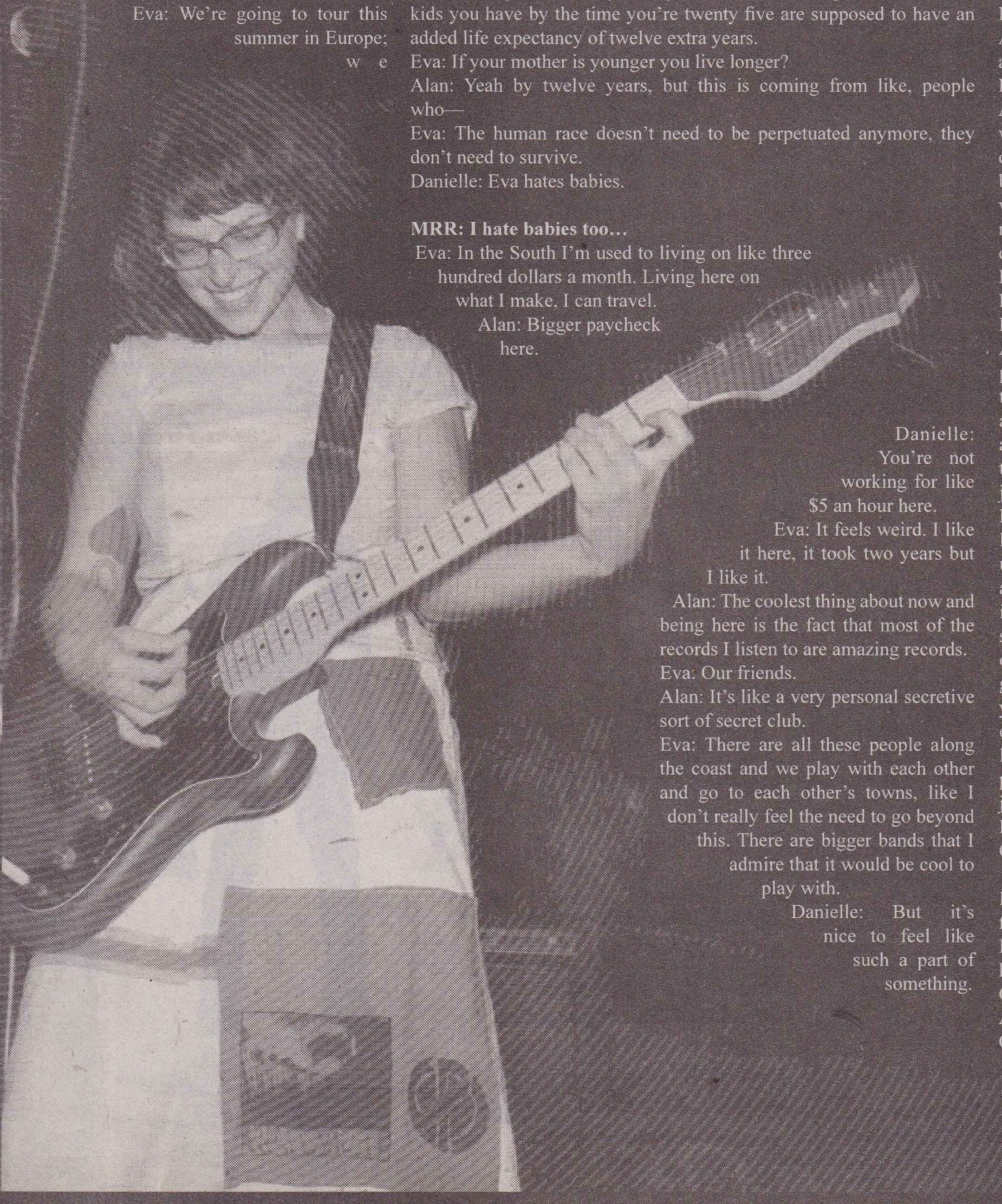
MRR: So those recordings will be a 7"?
Eva: Yeah we recorded six songs, three of them came out really good, and I don't know who will put it out, maybe a couple Portland labels.
Danielle: Maybe Jesse?

MRR: Any tours?
Eva: We're going to tour this summer in Europe; we haven't done a full US tour yet.
Danielle: Fuck America.
Alan: I just imagine a lot of people wouldn't like us—people in the middle… in the South.
Danielle: Just me as a person by itself.
Eva: Doesn't do too well in Middle America.
Danielle: I mean, I think it would be really awesome to do that…and we will at some point.
Eva: I definitely want to do it but—
Danielle: Europe first man, somebody else can drive us around.
Eva: So we can be super wasted, and me and Alan have never been anywhere.
Danielle: They don't even have fucking passports.
Eva: We're trying to get this driver that our friends used there and he was saying, "Yeah they have everything like amps and keyboard stands."
Danielle: We could start using keyboard stands.

MRR: That could be like your gimmick.
Alan: We could play our guitars like slide guitars.

MRR: So what is it like? Being from the South?
Eva: Alan went home for Christmas and every single person that he went to high school with is married with children, no one even ventured outside of that paradigm.
Alan: A lot of people, this one guy was freaking out to me about how he needs to get married by twenty five and start having kids because the kids you have by the time you're twenty five are supposed to have an added life expectancy of twelve extra years.
Eva: If your mother is younger you live longer?
Alan: Yeah by twelve years, but this is coming from like, people who—
Eva: The human race doesn't need to be perpetuated anymore, they don't need to survive.
Danielle: Eva hates babies.

MRR: I hate babies too…
Eva: In the South I'm used to living on like three hundred dollars a month. Living here on what I make, I can travel.
Alan: Bigger paycheck here.



Danielle: You're not working for like $5 an hour here.
Eva: It feels weird. I like it here, it took two years but I like it.
Alan: The coolest thing about now and being here is the fact that most of the records I listen to are amazing records.
Eva: Our friends.
Alan: It's like a very personal secretive sort of secret club.
Eva: There are all these people along the coast and we play with each other and go to each other's towns, like I don't really feel the need to go beyond this. There are bigger bands that I admire that it would be cool to play with.
Danielle: But it's nice to feel like such a part of something.
Eva: And makes it easier to kind of filter people out, like people who do things and go to shows.

MRR: Yeah, like no matter where I go, I know I can just go to a couple of shows and find people that I will definitely have something in common with, or even people I somehow already know.
Danielle: That's where my friends or potential friends are going to be.
Eva: People who do interesting things with their lives.

MRR: When I meet people who I've never seen at a show I kind of don't trust them.
Eva: Otherwise it's like "What do you do? Do you run a boardroom or something?"
Danielle: Watch TV!
Eva: Something.
Danielle: I feel like I was into music when I was like fourteen and then I stopped being into it and then the last two and a half years I've gotten back into it. But there was this huge chunk of time—
Eva: That's why we never knew each other.
Danielle: I never went to shows in Athens. I went to two during the three years I was there.
Alan: Didn't you go to my pyrotechnics show?
Danielle: Yeah! That was one of the two shows.
Alan: It was such a weird, it was me, Justin, Alex and Jeff from Long Legged Woman
Eva: That was one of the best shows ever.
Alan: The weird thing was everyone the next day was going to talk about the Bruce Springsteen cover band, like that was the big deal of the night, but then we actually stole the show. So we did this weird pop thing for awhile and then this crazy noise jam and fucking we brought out all these crazy fireworks.
Eva: Inside.
Danielle: In a living room.
Eva: In a living room like the size of this room.
Alan: Jeff melted part of his guitar, and Justin put his drums on the side and was just beating the bass drum, I was doing auxiliary percussion and everything was like, things were melting and all these fire works were going off, Alex was throwing M-80's at everyone around, then Jeff jumped on me.
Danielle: I went there by myself and I was just like "Oh my god, I have to go home, I don't even understand what's happening." But when you play a show there is like this community of people and it's awesome, and then you're part of this secret society like Alan was saying, and then you meet other people through that, and then you travel and go to different cities and meet new friends through your other friends. It's huge but it's small because everyone fucking knows everyone. I was at show last night, and all these people who I didn't realize play music and they didn't know I did and it was just like "What you're playing that show too?"
Eva: Marissa, do you know American Cheeseburger?

MRR: I've heard some stuff but I'm not too familiar.
Eva: FUCK! I've listened to this 7" so much it's kind of fucked sounding (she puts on American Cheeseburger) this is the best band… BEING IN A BAND RULES EVERYONE SHOULD DROP OUT OF COLLEGE!

Dadfag "Scenic Abuse" is out now on Broken Rekids www.brokenrekids.com

PARTIBREJKERS

By Predrag DelibasichOriginally published in Uzurlikzurli #2.

It was late July/early August 1984. My brother and I were working at my grandparents place, shifting the gravel to earn some pocket money we would spend for ice cream and lemonade later on. The day was bloody hot. I didn't like the idea of breaking my back, but couldn't help it. The pile of gravel was waiting for us, shovels were lying around, the work had to be done. Our small AM radio was turned to the local station that played some, more or less, middle of the road stuff. My mouth was sore and dry and I was on a brink of collapse when the announcer introduced the new band from Belgrade—Partibrejkers—and their debut single Hiljadu Godina ("One Thousand Years"). It was something I haven't heard before— fast, loud and dangerous for sure. I couldn't give such a description then, but it sounded like The New York Dolls on speed playing some prime Pretty Things tune. The drummer seemed untamed, guitars (no bass) fought against each other and singer desperately yelled how even if he could live one thousand years he would fit his whole life into one day. To a young teenager, like myself then, that was the only and whole truth.

A couple of months later I finally got the chance to hear B side of that single—again on the radio—this time in a car on our way to Greece. It wasn't as fast as "Hiljadu Godina," but the energy was there. Also, my father was irritated by the lyrics. We survived Orwellian 1984 (after all it was better than expected), and welcomed 1985. When I think about it 1985 wasn't such a good year for r'n'r—Sonic Youth and Hüsker Dü were about to make it big, punk and new wave were dead and well, most of the excitement was gone. That same year Partibrejkers released their debut self-titled LP—the best punk'n'roll record released that year.

But, let's reveal some history first: apparently they formed in 1981. Don't know about the rest of the band, but the singer Cane was in an excellent punk band Radnicka Kontrola, which, unfortunately, ended up releasing only two songs on a compilation LP. The first Partibrejkers song that saw the light of day was "Radio Utopia," which opened Vol. 1 of the series of compilation albums with some unsigned ("demo") Yugo bands. The song was good, but it didn't present the power they'd give us a year or two later.

Anyway, Partibrejkers (which means "Partybreakers," and is actually spelled as it is pronounced in Serbian) had their debut out in 1985. As with nearly every new band in Yugoslavia at that moment, they got some radio and TV airplay. At first it seemed as if they were going to make it, but I'll talk about that later.

Partibrejkers is the best album ever released in Yugoslavia, even though I hate to give such qualifications. There are several Yugo records that come very close to this one, but each and every one of them has some weak moment, while this one hasn't got any. It is perfect. I mean, if I gave my top ten list of LPs this one would be in it, right there with the Velvets, MC5, the Stooges and Ramones—it is that good. Front cover, back cover, lettering, lyrics, music, arrangements, playing, production, their clothes and shoes—everything is ten out of ten.

The cover is a shot of the band in action— cliché, but it works in some cases, and in this one in particular. I'm sure if you're a punk rock fanatic and come across this album, you would buy it without prior listening, just by looking at the cover. The

drummer looks like a runaway prisoner, singer like a skinhead who forgot to shave his head for a few weeks, the guitar player as if he was undecided (but still comfortable) and another one (very garagey looking) levitating in the air. Back cover contains lyrics written in a strange, square spiral (if you get me), way and credits done in a punk manner, ie, "nickname-instrument".

The first thing you could hear when the stylus strikes the opening "Ako Si" ("If You Are") are the guitars, and the only thing you can feel is the force, which won't leave you throughout all eleven songs from this album. It is possible that they just came up with the wordplay on the Heartbreakers. One thing that's for sure is that Partibrejkers were influenced by that Johnny Thunders' outfit, as well as by New York Dolls, Stooges, MC5, Dictators and the like. Also, it's obvious they were hooked on r'n'b.

None of the songs exceeds the limit of four chords (maybe a chord or two extra for a chorus), and the thing that makes it all more exciting is the absence of the bass guitar—only two guitars, both lead and rhythm, depends on perception. Now, you tell me, how many years before the Gories, Cheater Slicks and Oblivians was that?

Producer was Koja, once in a seminal punk band Sarlo Akrobata, then in the nearly as good Disciplina Kicme (now based in London, playing rave shit—at least that's what I've been told—how dull!). No matter how great the Partibrejkers were then, he made them sound even better on record—loud guitars, thumping drums and sharp vocals. Think about My Machine by the Humpers and anything by Teengenerate and you'll get a pretty close picture of the sound on this album. Even the break between the songs is so short, which makes it all even more fast-paced and dynamic.

Lyrics are desperate urban stories of love, hate, alienation, fear, lust, hope, and even child abuse (with a chorus: "Tajna Tatina Devojka"—"Secret Daddy's Girl"). These songs helped me through my turbulent puberty better than any friend, girl, psychologist, drug or alcohol ever could. I can't imagine what the author of the lyrics must've been through before writing it, for there's no way they were phoney.

I don't know much about the background of the guys in band, but the rumors are that one of the guitarists checked in a hospital quite a few times for drugs rehab and the singer was seen performing some extremely hard labor jobs. As said earlier, it seemed they would make it with their debut—their videos had a fair bit of airplay and they hit the charts, but nothing major happened. Knowing the circumstances back home then, I would say they sold up to 10,000 copies of the album, which was considered to be kind of a disaster for a new band on one of the two biggest labels in the country, and would usually end with dropping the band off. I can't say for sure if that happened in this case, but the band broke up soon after releasing their first LP.

Apparently, their early shows were great. The only live performance (in the line-up that played on the album) I've seen was the TV broadcast of Yugoslavian Band Aid (if you thought Band Aid and USA For Africa were bad wait to hear this one). Promoters managed to put up the gig on the biggest soccer stadium in Yugoslavia and lined up the crappiest pop/rock bands of the moment. Don't ask me who decided to let Partibrejkers play, but I'm sure the person who's done it got fired immediately. There they were—Partibrejkers were playing live right there in my home! I could've just stretched my arm and touch them. It was excellent, though only three songs, but they were cranking it up and the singer ran amok on stage. My father got annoyed again.

Too good to last, as they said. The band ceased to exist. Anton, a guitarist, shortly after played in another cool band called Placenici (Hitmen - now, that's not coincidence any more!). The singer also joined some band, but they didn't last long. The other guitar player seemed to be very quiet for the next several years, while the drummer, Manzanera, disappeared (virtually, I think).

Maybe the Partibrejkers weren't around anymore, but they left a huge testimony to the kids out there. They didn't sell too many records, but all the people who bought their album "went on to form their own bands." Soon after their demise lots of guys all over Yugoslavia realized that they could do it too, so they did. Overnight the city clubs became occupied by new punkish r'n'r bands to the delight of all the people (me included) who thought the r'n'r died with Partibrejkers. Unfortunately, major labels didn't want to have anything to do with these bunch of degenerates, so all that's left from that period are several cassette-only releases. Still, at the same time, independent record labels started forming up day by day, but that's another story.

Around early 1986 Partibrejkers reformed with a new line-up. Only the singer and guitarist were still in the band, with the new drummer, and bassist instead of second guitarist. I checked one of their first gigs and it was great, but not as good as before. Next year they put out second LP, titled Partibrejkers again. Their third album is self-titled as well, which causes a lot of confusion. From that point on I realized they were lost. I did check 'em out every time they played in the radius of 100 km around my area, but the energy from their debut was all gone. They sounded more like the Godfathers than the New York Dolls. 1992 saw release of semi-good live album, and in '94 they put their last(?) album so far—Kiselo I Slatko ("Sour and Sweet")—definitely their worst one ever! These days I don't know what's happening with them. The last I heard was that they played some big stadium gigs. Enough said.

There was a moment in 1992 when I thought they could still cut it - Partibrejkers played a gig in the city where I lived the night before our wedding. We went to the show just to have a few beers and kill the nervousness, and didn't have any expectations at all. The band got up on stage and stormed into "Biti Moja" ("You Must Be Mine") from their first LP—the song I saw them playing last time some five years before. The whole gig was furious and powerful, that we forgot about what was scheduled for the next day. Well, nearly.

As I am coming to an end of a story, or a saga, as you may say, I have to admit I never wrote review as long as this one ever. The fact is that I haven't heard Partibrejkers' first LP for at least five years, (I don't even have it on a tape at the time of writing this). Still, I know it by numbers. I know every detail on the cover, all the lyrics and riffs; I know every note by heart. Maybe Partibrejkers isn't the best album ever, but it is the one that affected my life as no record before or after.

And a bit of a trivia for all of you who think I went too seriously about everything: in early 1992 during FEST (the annual international film festival in Belgrade) Partibrejkers were joined live on stage by Johnny Depp on guitar and Jim Jarmush on back-up vocals. I saw the whole event on telly and am still trying to obtain the video of it. Also, Partibrejkers haven't only influenced the Yugo bands—Antiseen have blatantly ripped of "Tajna Tatina Devojka" and re-titled it "Wife Beater" while L7's "Shit List" is nearly a note-by-note copy of "Ulicni Hodac" ("Street Walker")

Partibrejkers Discography:

Partibrejkers I LP (1985)
Partibrejkers II LP (1988)
Partibrejkers III LP (1989)
Zabava Jos Traje /live LP (1992)
Kiselo I Slatko LP (1994)
Najbolje Od Najgoreg Compilation LP (1996)
Ledeno Doba LP (1997)
San I Java compilation LP (1999)
Gramzivost I Pohlepa LP (2002)
Sloboda Ili Nista LP (2007)

The Partibrejkers
Zoran Kostic Cane- Vocals (On all LP's)
Nebojsa Antonijevic Anton- Guitar (On all LP's)
Ljubisa Konstadinovic- Guitar (On I LP)
Goran Bulatovic Manza- Drums (On I LP)
Branislav Petrovic- Harmonica (On I LP)
B. Trivic- Saxophone (On I LP)
Vlada Funtek- Drums (On II LP)
Dima Todorov Mune- Bass (On II LP)
Igor Borojevic- Drums (On III LP
Pera Joe- Harmonica (On III LP
Darko Utvar- Drums (On Sloboda...LP)
Vladislav Rac- Bass (On Sloboda... LP)

Scatha

Scatha formed from the ashes of Sedition and Disaffect in the '90s with the aim of playing much slower, heavier material that they did to great effect. Combining crunching riffs, manic drumming and crazed vocals with intelligent lyrics and cool artwork; they were easily one of my favourite Scottish bands of the era. I was lucky enough to see them many times, having been in a band that toured with them a couple of times and had plenty of laughs (like breaking into Stonehenge) but I'll leave the talking to Angus.

This interview was conducted by Kenji Yamaji for Doll *magazine with Angus Quinn, vocalist of Scatha. Unfortunately, the magazine folded and the interview wasn't published. However, last year I started work on a zine about Scottish punk throughout the years and was offered this piece but unfortunately, my zine didn't see the light of day either, so we thought sending it off to the good folks at* MRR *would be the best option.*

Intro by Mark Nelson

Photos by Angus and Brunta

MRR: Angus, we all know that you are originally a member of Sedition. Can you tell me why Sedition broke up?

Angus: From the beginning of Sedition, Brycey (bass) and myself had always shared flats and houses, which made it easy as we were writing most of the songs for the band. By the time the split happened, we were both living at opposite sides of the country, so we were no longer able to write stuff together as easily and freely as before. It became more and more difficult to get together regularly enough to work on any new material and this inevitably led to a great deal of frustration. There was a break down in communication and in our relationship, which finally ended in the band splitting.

MRR: So how was Scatha formed? I've heard that it was formed by ex-members of Sedition and Disaffect. Can you tell me the behind story back then?

Angus: After Sedition split in 1993 and Disaffect split in 1994, Andy and I.B. from Disaffect, started writing some new slower and heavier songs. I had already written some lyrics, which I intended for a slow, heavy band, and I already had the name Scatha in mind when they asked me if I'd be interested in doing vocals. Billy (ex-Sedition and Disaffect) was asked to play second guitar, and Jason (ex-Stretchheads) was asked to drum. Thus, Scatha was born.

MRR: Can you name some bands (of any style, not just punk/hardcore bands) that influenced you back in the early '90s?

Angus: We all listened to different music. I remember Billy liking Brazilian hardcore bands, Andy liked a lot of slow, heavy bands and also some d-beat bands (especially from Japan). I.B. liked a lot of US hardcore bands. Jason came from an indie-noise background, with the Stretchheads, which I reckon led him to get into a lot of blast-beat noise bands. I was also listening to some slow and heavy bands, and a lot of traditional Celtic, folk, and tribal music at the time. I suppose it was the slow, heavy bands we were listening to at the time that influenced us most, since that's what we set out to play from the beginning.

MRR: Is there any specific singer that influenced you?

Angus: No; no one in particular. I liked a lot of Italian HC bands at the time we did Sedition. There were a few other bands around with screaming vocals, but most bands at that time had deep, growling vocals. With Sedition, I wanted to do something different from that, whereas with Scatha, I just wanted it to be completely different from Sedition. I think I probably thought I was being really clever at the time!

MRR: What was the intention in using Pictish patterns on Sedition and Scatha artwork? Was that to show the bands roots?

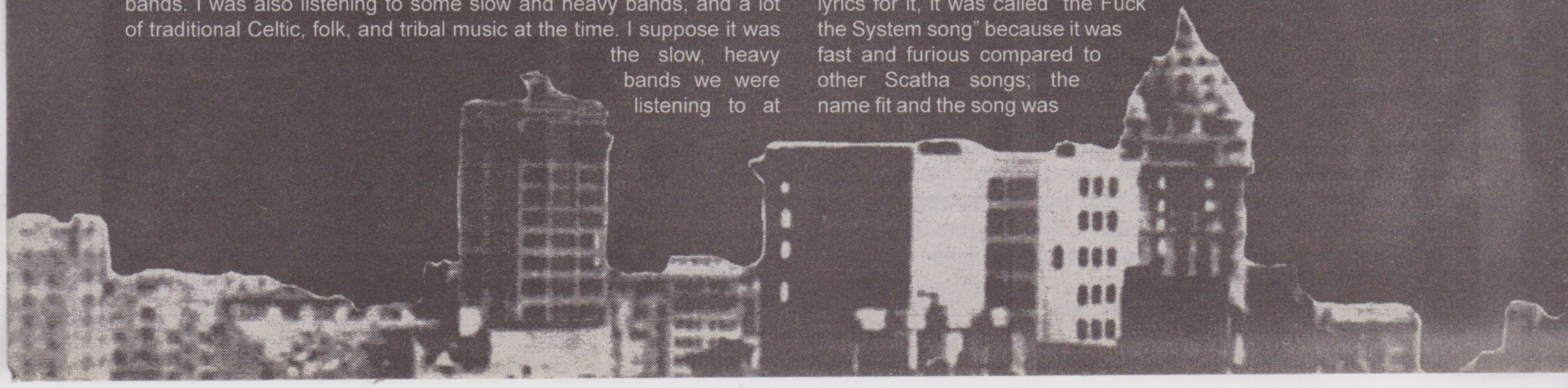
Angus: Basically, yes. I wanted to use the artwork from our own cultural background to show our identity and affinity with that culture as a band based in Scotland, but in a modern context; to use bold symbols from the past as logos and graphics like most other punk/hardcore bands used modern symbols and images as logos in their art and graphics. Some of the early 1980s anarcho-punk bands used amazing modern and sometimes old symbols in their logos and graphics. Bold and striking. You only need to see the image alone to immediately think of the band associated with it. That's the idea I was trying to create.

MRR: It looks like the sword and snake image is the symbol of Scatha. Who did this artwork? What is the meaning of this symbolic image?

Angus: This is based on a very rare version of a very famous Pictish symbol, which is found carved into stones all over Scotland. Its more famous version has a "Z" shaped rod instead of the single rod of the rare version. When I first drew the symbol for Scatha, I deliberately stylized it to fit more with the band name, changed the shape of the snake to form the "S" and stylized the rod to make the whole symbol more bold and simple. In a lot of ancient cultures, it is believed that the snake or serpent was a symbol of the power within the earth, and the rod, or sword/lance, was a way of harnessing or channeling that power.

MRR: Please explain the meanings of each title: "Respect, Protect, Reconnect," "Fuck the System," and "Birth, Life and Death." They are seemingly simple, but I assume there must be hidden, deeper messages under the words. Can you tell me some thoughts and feelings for each of them?

Angus: "Respect, Protect, Reconnect" was a title I had for a while, before Scatha. I just liked the way it sounded. Here, it directly refers to our relationship with the earth and how we take it for granted these days. We ignore its importance to our own existence, but you could apply it to anything in life I suppose; "family", for instance, another thing I think we take for granted nowadays. "Fuck the System" was a joke title we had for a song that became "Fuck the System." Before we had any lyrics for it, it was called "the Fuck the System song" because it was fast and furious compared to other Scatha songs; the name fit and the song was



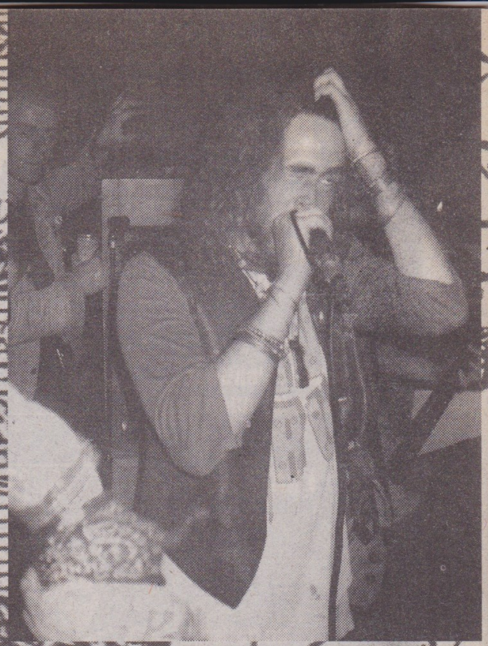
formed around that title. "Birth, Life and Death" just describes the subjects we deal with on the first three songs from that album. The cycle of life, death and rebirth was very important in a lot of ancient cultures all over the world, but again, it's something we take for granted, especially here in the west.

MRR: What is the original source of the sample in "Fuck the System?" What was the intention to use that?
Angus: It comes from an Italian/Spaghetti western movie called *A Professional Gun*, AKA *The Mercenary*. Some others in the band and I were/are big spaghetti western fans, so finding that sample was great and we just had to use it for that song. It fit so well and it's still my favorite sample that we used.

MRR: Can you describe the situation of the scene in the late '90s, when Scatha started?
Angus: The UK scene in the '90s was still very DIY, still quite strong, still a lot of bands playing in the DIY scene, and still a lot of people putting on DIY gigs. So, things were still very active when we started Scatha. A lot of international bands were coming to the UK whilst touring in Europe, so there were plenty of opportunities to see and play with loads of bands old and new. We were able to tour around Scotland and England twice, as well as two tours of mainland Europe in the first couple of years of being together. So, yeah, I'd say the scene was still quite exciting back then.

MRR: Which bands had you guys done gigs with at that time?
Angus: There were a lot, far too many to remember them all, so, apologies to anyone we've missed out. I'm impressed that we managed to remember this many, but here's a few Andy and myself could remember...Quarantine, Doom, Cress, ABC Diablo, Defiance, Drop Dead, Dezerter, La Fraction, Y, Los Crudos, Lost Cherrees, Anomie, Disfear, Gurkha, Muckspreader, Unhinged, Hiatus, Sawn Off, Post Regiment, Headache, Bloodshot, Extinction Of Mankind, Svart Sno, Counterblast, Catastrophobia and the Dagda.

MRR: The way you dressed in the Scatha era was more tribal than leather-and-studs or crusty. Were you intentionally dressing in that way?
Angus: I think Andy would be most upset to hear you say that, he's always liked his leather'n'studs. But, no, we never had a band image, as such. Everyone dressed as they dressed from day to day; what we wore when not playing in the band was the same as we wore when playing in the band, nothing was contrived. I suppose with Sedition, it was more contrived because we usually wore kilts when playing, but again we also wore kilts when not playing then too, so I don't remember ever thinking about a band image or dress code, as such. It was just the way we looked at the time. However unfashionable or stupid that was.



MRR: Japanese people are not really familiar with Celtic culture, to be honest. Could you tell me what are the attractive points of Celtic culture?
Angus: I think it's important to know your own cultural roots whatever they may be. It is never about nationality, as we are all human beings whatever corner of the world we are born into, but your culture is your roots and routes to yourself; your guidance in life. Your culture should help teach you respect and your place within the surrounding environment. There is nothing distinctly attractive about the Celtic culture that doesn't exist in a lot of other ancient or modern tribal based cultures. Being Scottish, it was just an easy starting point for me in exploring my own self-awareness, but it has also lead me to learning about and appreciating other indigenous or tribal cultures from all around the world and what they can also teach me.

MRR: Not every Japanese person knows the difference between the countries in Great Britain. Do you have a special feeling or opinions about England's politics or music?
Angus: The main differences between the countries that make up Britain are purely political—a false sense of nationalist pride that is usually fed by politicians and the mainstream media or at certain sporting events. There is no real cultural difference from place to place within Britain anymore. The Anglo-American influence in most of the west means cultural differences from country to country are becoming blurred and less important as time goes on. Consumerism is today's culture of choice in most of these countries and capitalism ensures we keep on consuming. The saddest part is that most poor countries, usually rich in their own cultural heritage, still covet this culture of consumerism we have already embraced and most of the wealthier countries are more than happy to bring it to them, but at what cost?

MRR: How was the discography project with MCR company started? What drew you guys to do it? I appreciate the project because all the original Scatha releases are getting hard to find these days.
Angus: Andy, who played guitar in Scatha, also played in Ruin. Ruin was releasing stuff for MCR already and I think Andy mentioned to Yumikes from MCR that we were looking for someone to release the Scatha discography. Yumikes said he'd do it. It was good for us because usually when MCR release the CD version, Agipunk (Italy) release it on vinyl too. As you say, the vinyl is hard to find now, so it's a bonus for all.

MRR: Now you are doing T.R.I.B.E as your main activity after Scatha. Can you tell me the reason for Scatha breaking up?
Angus: Scatha broke up because we were finding it too difficult to get together regularly enough for rehearsals and to write new material. We were all busy with jobs, family, and also other bands. It was more and more difficult to arrange when everyone could get together at the same time, so we decided amicably between us that it was time to quit.

MRR: Please tell me the plans and projects of T.R.I.B.E., as far as the schedule goes.
Angus: First, around the autumn 2009, we will contribute a brand new song to a benefit CD for Leonard Peltier, which will be released by the French organization *AISIA/Kan ar Bleiz*. This will be the first song of new material that we have been working on for some time now, we hope to have all the songs ready for recording before the end of 2009, and we hope to be ready to play the new material live as soon after that as possible.

MRR: Please give a message to Japanese punks to end this interview.
Angus: Thanks to Kenji (Doll) for these questions and his patience in waiting for the answers, thanks to everyone who has, and still does, support what we have done and still do!!! R.E.S.P.E.C.T!!!

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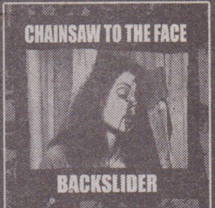

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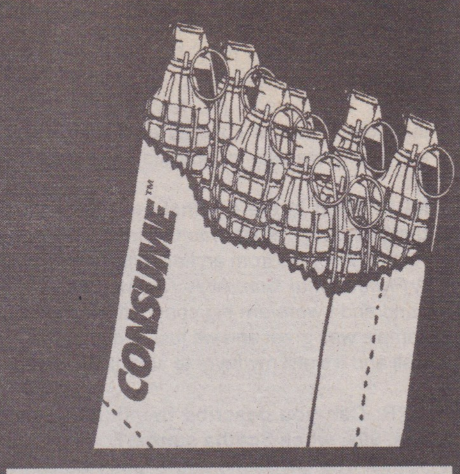

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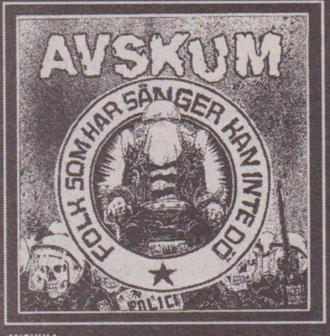

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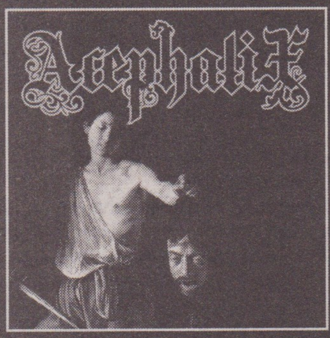

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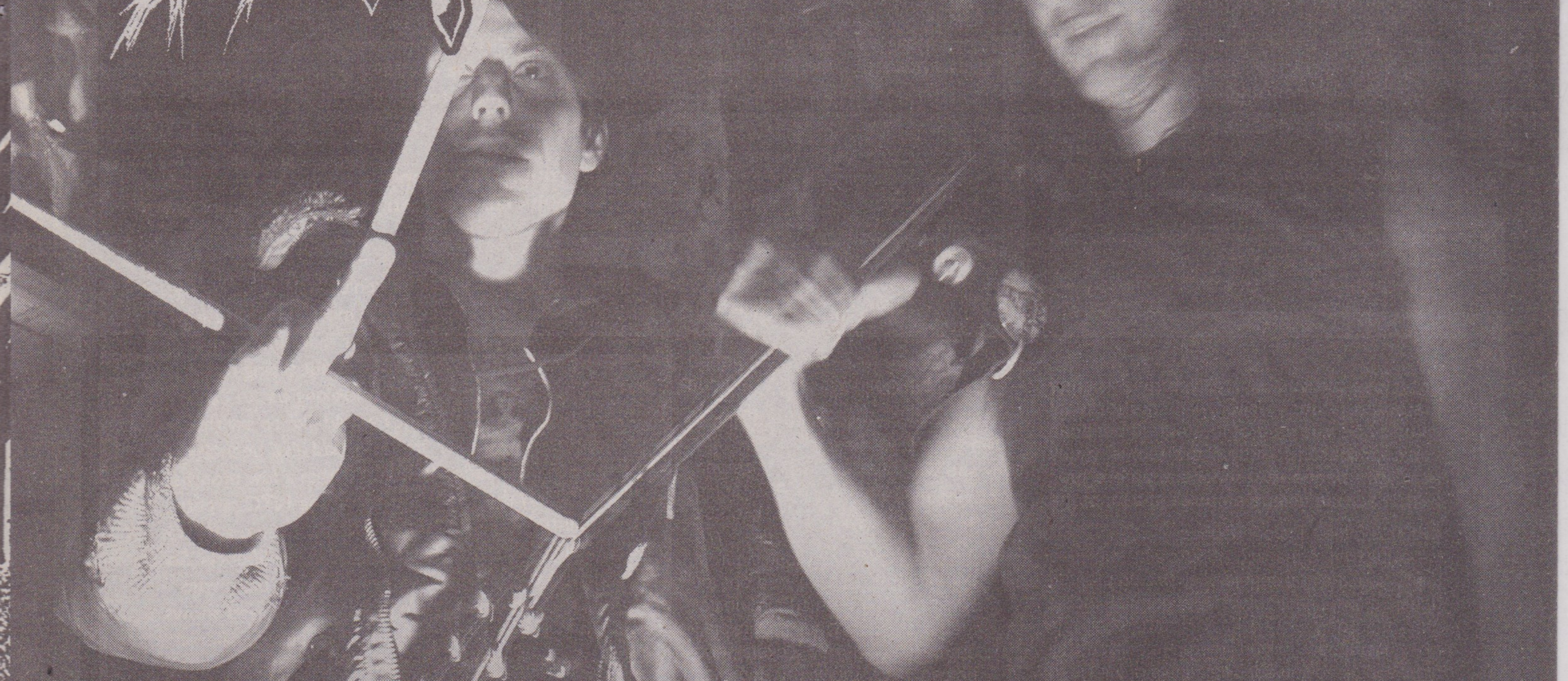


Interview by Dan Butler

Hailing from NYC, the two cavemen of Battletorn have been hammering out their raw blend of proto-grind and HC for 5 years now. Sounding like a cross between bands like Terrorizer (sans blasts), Negative FX, and Onslaught, Battletorn have a distinctive sound, with pounding drums and a haunting "Hellhammer guitar tone". As a band they thrive on simplicity: two members, short songs, simple song structure and lyrics. "This is a caveman band," Omid says. But this is only a half-truth. The reality, as always, is more dynamic. Not only was there once a "cavewoman" in the band, but the paths taken and lyrical reflections by the band aren't obviously so simple. Like their mascot Tungar, Battletorn are on a quest that appears to be deeper than the simplicity of their music may suggest. The quest thus far hasn't led to the band's demise in the form of hardened cynicism (i.e. being dead alive), as the ideals of the band seemed to have remained a strong guiding force through all the complications that came to pass. Friendship and the idea of music as a release have guided the band through 5 years of playing, more outside the spotlight than in, and more on the margins of punk/metal/HC production lines than not. This is a conversation with Omid, singer and guitarist of the band. He is a down to earth guy who seems to have a simple agenda, both in the band and in his life: to make the most of it.

MRR: So for MRR readers maybe a brief history of the band. I think it began in a porn shop?

Omid: Yeah, well it does all kind of start in the basement of a Times Square porn shop... it was probably about 1998 or 1999 and I was up there looking around because this particular shop also had a large selection of non-adult cult horror flicks and stuff. I asked this guy at the counter if they had a copy of this movie Stunt Rock which is a '70s movie that has this killer hard rock band Sorcery in it and the dude tried to tell me he could get me a copy. But he literally meant a bootleg dubbed copy, not a real copy! Anyways, I ended up declining the offer and went back later to give him a cassette of the soundtrack and we started talking about music. Turned out he was in a grind band called How We Lost the War, and I told him I had been in Enemy Soil and we became friends. It was many years later that we actually started to play music together though, but that was the origins!

MRR: Okay, so how did you guys eventually hook up? And how was Beverly introduced to the picture?

Omid: Well, so over the years I went to see William's band HWLTW at some grind shows like the Loud As Fuck festivals Raphy from Disassociate used to do at CBGB every year, and he used to come out to metal shows that I would book in Brooklyn. So William and I were friends, and then I met Beverly because she worked at this shop my friends run and we went to see King Diamond and Entombed together at L'Amour in Brooklyn around the end 2003 or so. When she was at my house getting ready to go to the show she was looking at my CD collection and pointing out bands like Assuck and stuff and I asked her why she wasn't in a band and I had been thinking about getting into playing music again—I hadn't played since I was in Enemy Soil in 1997 so anyways, I called William and asked him if he wanted to start a band, then we jammed and then Beverly came in and sang, and we became Battletorn.

MRR: you guys both played in grind bands but Battletorn was getting compared to bands like Sin 34 and The Comes (mostly probably because of Beverly's vocals). Musically what were your intentions when you started? Who was your inspiration at the time?

Omid: Basically the idea was to start a band that was supposed to be with this guy Sean (who is now in a band Pollution) it was supposed to be an "avalanche of hardcore" band with like 3 guitarists and I think we were going to have his girlfriend sing or something! Somehow we never got around to actually playing with Sean and it just became me and William and my idea was to have a fast HC band influenced by early NYHC and Boston HC bands because that's my favorite HC/punk stuff. So when we went in to the rehearsal studio the first time I had brought in the Negative FX discography CD to give to William and we decided we would learn the Last Rites song Chunks as some sort of starting point to kick off from. So we learned that song, and jammed out on some other riffs that we both brought in and it was pretty fluid. I have to say it never felt forced or difficult. It just sort of organically happened and the sounds just flowed so we went with it! I think we both have our metal side too and somehow that works its way in, but mostly we are just a hardcore punk kinda band I think. The guitar sound is definitely metal; people always say we have a Hellhammer guitar tone, which is flattering! Beverly's rather high pitched vocals were a stark contrast to the sounds we were coming up with, which I think made it unique and cool, I loved it right away! We never tried out singers/members or anything, we were just friends who decided to jam and start a band, so we did it. But as far as those bands like The Comes and Sin 34, I hate to say it but I still have never even heard those bands!

MRR: Mega Blade, the label that did the first release. This was a Troubleman offshoot? How'd that happen?

Omid: I guess that came about because I had met Mike who runs Troubleman somewhere along the line and we became friends. Then when we started Battletorn, he booked us a couple times at shows he was setting up, and eventually one night at one of our shows he asked if we'd want to do a single on his "offshoot" label he was starting with this guy Dennis called Mega Blade. The name of the label was great (half of it from Megaforce and half Metalblade, two classic metal labels), and we liked those guys so we said yeah we'd do it. They wanted to do a one sided single with like one of our songs, which would have made it like a 30 second single, but we ended up putting two songs on it and it was a minute and a half long! The b-side was etched but they fucked up and put a label on the b-side so the etching came out kinda strange but whatever. They were never about attention to detail, which is kind of why we only stuck with that label for a very short while.

MRR: Because of Troubleman's reputation as more of a kind of indie post-punk label do you think it hurt the band's image?

Omid: Yeah, it definitely did. I think we weren't taken seriously by the kind of people who would appreciate us musically because we weren't on a label that would typically put out that kind of shit. We didn't give a fuck at the time, we were never about trying to sell records or reach our "target audience," but looking back I can say that it did have some effect for sure. But I would like to say that we appreciate Troubleman giving us our start. We had also been asked for a demo by the head of Matador Records within a few months of becoming a band. Guess there was a buzz on the NYC streets about us and they wanted some of it. We never sent them a demo. I refused to be on a label with people as tender as Jon Spencer. So they got Early Man instead! But yeah, we were never a band who recorded or even circulated a demo. We just started, played shows everywhere we could like it was our job, and then people offered to put out records for us and that was that. As I said above it all happened pretty fluidly and organically.

MRR: Aside from the fact that Mega Blade is a great name, In going with the label reflects a kind of open-mindedness that people in the HC/metal scenes may not like. Would you agree? Does the over-attachment to image and seeming closed-mindedness of the HC/metal scenes ever bother you?

Omid: There is definitely a lot of that "image" stuff that is tied into both HC and metal for sure, I would agree with that. I mean, if you are a certain type of band you are expected to dress a certain way, end up on a certain label, and if you do all those things you are guaranteed a certain degree of "success" I guess. So yeah, we pretty much went against that and we are long-haired kinda hippy metalhead freaks playing fast hardcore who ended up on a hipster NYC label, so it was kind of a middle finger to that whole way of doing things! But as I will probably end up repeating over and over, a lot of Battletorn is about friendship and family type things, and those were our friends at the time so we wanted to be on their label. I mean, Mike from Troubleman came to my house and he brought over his copies of the first Fix and Necros singles to show me, I was floored that he owned those! I don't know anyone else who does, I even put a photo of them on the collage of the Evil Chains album! So yeah, we went on their label because they were our friends and wanted to support our band, we didn't wait around for a label that releases crust or HC to discover us and put us out. Fuck it.

MRR: I noticed while living in NY that you guys wouldn't just play with HC bands or metal bands. It truly seemed like you just wanted to play.

Omid: Yeah, that's totally true we wanted to be like the old '70s and '80s rock/metal bands and just play. It was a blitz and we took any stage or shit hole that would let us on it with any bands at all, we didn't care! We were having fun playing. We had originally only planned on being a band for one year and seeing how much we could do in that time, so there was a sense of time restrictions too! But we ended up stretching it to five years now!

MRR: One of your early shows was with Riistetyt. What are some more memorable shows from the Beverly era?

Omid: Yeah, we did get to play with Riistetyt. That was awesome! In the year and a half Beverly was in the band we played a bunch of great shows; that was a really fun time. We even had nights where we would play two shows in a night! We were hungry! Almost all the shows we did in that era were a blast, until the end. Then it started getting weird and the three of us were barely talking and were going in different directions, which made them not as fun. We weren't really friends any more, and that as I said is the core of Battletorn ... friendship. So when that was getting strained things had to change.

MRR: After Mega Blade you guys did end up on a more established HC label, Mad at the World. By this time Beverly was no longer in the band.

Omid: Right. Well at some point we had gotten an email from Mad at the World saying they had seen us live and wanted to talk to us about maybe doing a single or something. I mentioned it at practice because I was excited they liked us. They were a NYC label that mainly seemed to be doing reissues of great old NYHC bands like Nihilistics, Urban Waste, Major Conflict, and bands like that so we'd be in great company! But for some reason the idea was met with lukewarm response by other members, mainly Beverly I think who thought we should stick with Mega Blade. Which was fine with me, I didn't really care that much at the time, Mega Blade had offered to do a full length for us so we just stuck with them and put out our first LP Evil Chains in fall of 2005. We had done a full US tour in summer of 2005, which was hard. We were as I said above starting to lose our friendship and that was making it hard to function as a band. Mainly Beverly and I were not getting along, so things got tough because I loved her and what she brought to the table musically for the band, but personality wise we just couldn't do it. So pretty much right after Evil Chains came out we decided to split from her and carry on without her.

We had been asked by this band Kamikaze to go to the UK to do a tour and Beverly was acting like she didn't want to go, so that was the breaking point really. I just wanted to go do shit and she seemed to second-guess things, so that was that. It wasn't easy. But William and I agreed to basically never play any of the songs she had written lyrics for but continue on as Battletorn.

MRR: How was this transition into a two-piece? Did you think about adding other members?

Omid: OK, back to after Beverly left. For a minute there we thought about getting a new singer, but there was a time crunch because we wanted to get out a new record of the "Mach II" Battletorn and it seemed like it was best to just keep it a two piece with William and I, and I would sing. Mad at the World Records had stepped up and told us they wanted to work with us, so everything fell into place quick. We wrote and recorded the Burn Fast single in the first couple months of 2005, got it pressed and were in the UK touring as a two piece in April 2005! It was kind of a bitch getting used to singing and playing guitar—I had done it long long ago when I was seventeen years old playing in my drunk rock bands like Pork Trimmer doing KISS covers to get free beer at keg parties! But we figured it out and got it done. It was sink or swim so we had to. As I said after she left we were basically a band with one song (Evil Chains was one I'd written all of so we kept that), a name, and a tour of the UK, so we just hunkered down and did what we had to.

MRR: My questions are a bit focused on the facts, which you document so well yourself! You've written pretty lengthy tour reports and band bios. What's the motivation behind that? Anything other than just wanting to document the goings on of the band?

Omid: Honestly it's almost more for myself than anyone. I have noticed, as I get older I am forgetting a lot more of what happens in my life. Part of that might be due to all the substances I put in my body to try and forget stuff for so many years, and some of it might just be getting older and how the older you get each year and things that happen to you becomes a smaller part of a bigger picture. So it gets hard to remember it all! Plus I am an avid music fan and love reading stuff about bands I like, so I like to put that stuff out there for people who like our band. And for us too,

because I think I speak for all that have been in this band and I hope this doesn't sound conceited but we are fans of our own band too! I hate that people feel they can't like their own band, or wear their own bands shirts, or whatever. If you don't like your own fucking band why even bother doing it?

That response was to your question about documenting the bands activities. And as an addition to that, I would say that I am working on doing a Battletorn book to document all the activities, stories, photos, flyers, etc. too. I will probably only make 100 or so copies, but it seems like a more fun way to document the last five years than on a web site! If the Plasmatics could write a book about themselves then I think it's OK for us too!

MRR: It seems like Battletorn is more a vehicle for experience (of friendship and the high of playing shows) than just a band trying to reach its target audience. The same artist has done all of your artwork (including the logo?), but it seems like there's less emphasis placed on image in a way and more on the experience of playing music and having fun. These are kind of (from my perspective) more punk principles, more of a punk approach to playing music, but you grew up playing in hard rock bands called Pork Trimmer. Do you think there's a closer relationship between punk, metal, rock, whatever than scene purists would like to believe?

Omid: Wasn't it you who described our show as "a violent spirit of togetherness?" I think I used that on our bio! We are definitely about that, and I always loved that you said that and I felt it captured our vibe. As I said I am a damaged hippy metal punk who has his musical roots firmly in one thing: rock and roll. And the rest of these kinds of music are all just off shoots of that basic root of rock. Maybe you can trace it back further than that to the blues, but I just grew up on rock. I grew up listening to bands like GUESS WHO and FLEETWOOD MAC, bands who wrote catchy songs with verses, choruses, and melodies, and you can hear all of that in Battletorn too. So from a musical perspective that is where it's rooted, and as far as the mentality behind the band—you hit the nail on the head. We were in it to hang out with friends, play some music we dug, and have a good time doing it. I think the punk part comes from our attitude and way of doing it ourselves and our way without participating in the "music industry machine" or catering to any particular audience. And from my eyes there is a "punk industry machine" in play that's not so different from the major label machines that churn out product bands for a particular audience. But whatever, it's wasn't worth worrying or thinking about, we just got out there and did our thing. Some people have gotten it, some haven't, we are happy with what we've done so that's all that matters in the end.

MRR: You would think it's obvious that friendship and fun are more important than getting big. But as was mentioned, it seems so many bands, even within "underground" scenes, are still focused on getting big. Why do you continue to choose friendship and fun over opportunities that you may have had to "get ahead"? Like you may have gotten more exposure on Mega Blade for instance....

Omid: Because to me in the end friends and family are the most important thing. And I don't mean family in the sense of blood relatives as much as some of the friends and people I am closest with in this world who are my family. I look back on Battletorn and have so many great memories of the people I have met and shared time with through this band, and that's been the most important part to me. William and I have been together in this band for over five years now, that's longer than any relationship that I've ever been in has lasted! And being in a band is like being in a relationship. I'm also very proud of all we've accomplished musically and have left behind as our musical record... but on a personal level the friendships and experiences are what have meant the most to me. I love William like a brother and appreciate all that we have done together, and Beverly too. And all the bands we've met and toured with, and label folks like Dan and Asim from Mad at the World, great people.

It's like Lynyrd Skynyrd says in that song Am I Losin which is about losing friends... "Cause your friend Lord is the most important thing." I love Lynyrd Skynyrd. For me Ronnie's lyrics are a gospel of sorts. Some people read the bible, I'd rather read his lyrics.

MRR: Do you think he read the bible?

Omid: I know he read the bible. He was raised a southern religious family, so I would bet he did there's a lot of spirituality and god references in his lyrics. Maybe I should read it sometime too; I hear it's a good novel!

MRR: Does spirituality enter into your lyrics?

Omid: Yeah it does. That was a huge sticking point with Beverly too, when I wrote the song Evil Chains and wanted to name the first LP after that song. It is a song about being strung out and losing hope, which was interpreted as being as too spiritual or AA or something. It wasn't meant to be either, it was just about my experience, which was one of many that lead to me getting sober and living a clean and more spiritual life for over eleven years now. There are a lot of songs that I've written since we became a two-piece that have links to my spiritual experiences and beliefs. All of it comes from my life, there's very little fantasy lyric writing since we became a two-piece. And by spiritual experiences I mean both good and bad. I consider near death experiences even if at my own hand spiritual experiences, but not very positive ones that I would ever suggest anyone try. The message and spiritual experience I want to convey more than any other is one of survival and hope. Unfortunately it always comes out sounding pretty angry and raw, so maybe people miss that! My name means "hope" in Farsi so I've always tried to hold onto it even in the darkest times. For me music has provided a lot of support in some of those hard times, and maybe our music can do that for people too, be a release for things they need to process and let go of. And maybe just have fun and bang their heads while doing it!

MRR: So we left off talking about Ronnie's lyrics and the topic of spirituality in lyrics. It reminded me of something you'd mentioned about a disagreement or a difference between your and Beverly's respective styles of writing lyrics. Wasn't it initially over the song Evil Chains?

Omid: I think there were some minor disagreements about lyrics before the Evil Chains thing. Basically how it went was that we'd pretty much given Beverly free reign to write about what she wanted, but at a certain point we started reading the lyrics and realizing she was using words that we didn't even know what they meant and we asked that she please not use words that we (the other two band members) would have to get out a dictionary to understand.

For the most part her lyrics ruled, some great gory horror movie stuff and social commentaries that were cool, but then it started getting complicated and we were like "listen, this is a caveman (and woman) thrash band, can you please keep it simple?" That didn't go over well.

MRR: What were some of the words out of curiosity? You remember?

Omid: And though we welcomed her input musically, she wasn't interested in letting us contribute or be a part of writing lyrics. The word, and it was really this one word that it came down to was "hegemony". It did end up being in a song on Evil Chains in the end.

MRR: "Cut It," That's the word I was gonna guess!

Omid: That's right, that's the song. She wanted to call it "New Hegemony" and we settled on a different song title but leaving the big college word in there.

So anyways, around this time I had the song Evil Chains come into my head—music, lyrics, and all—on a subway train ride and brought it to the table. She was not pleased. It was almost the end of the trio right there before we'd even recorded our first LP.

MRR: So what we're her reservations about Evil Chains?

Omid: Well, I remember so clearly going into Beacons Closet and having this drag out fight with her where she started saying that she (and evidently some of her friends she had asked) thought that Evil Chains sounded like some kind of AA slogan and that the song sounded preachy and recovery oriented. I told her it was about my own experience and that was it. She said she didn't want to sing those words, so I said I'd sing them... back forth back forth. Then I told her I thought we should name the album after that track because it was the catchiest title and the shit hit the fan. I got the title for that song from a book about a religious commune, a religious community where this woman lived, and she talked about "evil chains"... and I just thought "man, those two words sound great together. Gotta use it." She just talked about her hard times and the "evil chains" that bound her. Not too deep really.

MRR: So for Beverly though, just the fact that there's a religious association bothered her. Right?

Omid: Well, I think it was the religious/recovery connection.

MRR: Battletorn lyrics are all seem pretty general and abstract. Evil Chains just sounds like a song about struggle.

Omid: Yes, I would agree that the lyrics that I have written are definitely more abstract and vague. I could tell you what every song was about but I don't say everything totally literally. And yes, Evil Chains is about struggle and survival.

MRR: So the lyrics are really important to you even though you want to keep them simple.

Omid: Lyrics are very important, but yeah, I like to keep them simple. And I like them to rhyme when possible like the old rock songs I grew up on ha ha. Verse, chorus, verse, chorus!

MRR: Caveman.

Omid: Totally! Hooks, choruses you can remember even if it's only a 45 second song!

MRR: Recovery is a pretty deep process for a caveman, no?

Omid: Yes, a recovering Caveman! That's a good way of putting it ha..

MRR: What's it like to be in recovery and in the HC/metal scene for you?

Omid: It's a long tedious process! A lifelong process! But I'm trying Dan! So far it's worked for eleven years!!! That's a good question. To be honest, I don't think about it too much, in regards to the metal/HC scene, I just think about it in life in general.

Being sober is fucking hard sometimes. A lot of times. But it's worth it, and I wouldn't trade it for anything.

I did it all; I have nothing left to try except living life without crutches.

MRR: When did you get sober? Were you playing music? Was it during or post Enemy Soil? Eleven years is post... right?

Omid: It was post Enemy Soil. It was in fall 1998 when I was 24. I had just moved to NYC and no I wasn't playing music at the time.

MRR: Was there a time when you felt self-conscious specifically about being sober around a bunch of drunk punks or metalheads?

Omid: Actually I would have to say never. By the time I got sober the whole straight edge bubble had burst and most people in the HC scene were raging partiers, so in a way I was living the new counter culture by being sober! haha...

MRR: Ahhh, a contrarian! I can relate!

Omid: Metalheads were always ragers, so it was interesting being around some of them sober but they never made me feel weird. Especially those who knew me when I was using/drinking- they were glad to not have to deal with me like that, ha ha.

Yes, contrarian! Wait, what does that word mean? Did you go to college or something Dan? I have my masters but don't know that one.

I assume it means being contradictory or something!

MRR: Like always going contrary to other people. You said it was the new counter culture. When you started Battletorn did it seem like people expected you to be grind because of the Enemy Soil connection? Would you say there's a grind influence?

Omid: Yeah, I guess some folks might have expected some grind but then again I was only in Enemy Soil for about a year so it wasn't my life's blood or anything. But being in Enemy Soil did teach me how to play fast, that's for sure! Richard Johnson has the patience of a saint to have been about to deal with me while I was in Enemy Soil. I was a longhaired mess. I meant to say to have been able to deal with me.

MRR: How do you feel about maybe not meeting peoples expectations who want you to be this kind of band or that kind of band?

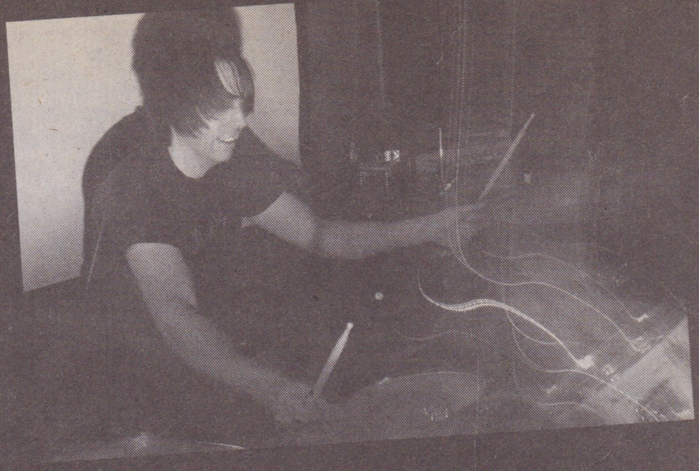
Omid: Not a dumb question but I hadn't thought of it. But I guess I'd say fuck em! We didn't set out to play for any certain crowd or people. I think we did catch people off guard, we were probably expected to play metal since I was a long hair and such a metalhead, but I also loved HC and punk so Batttletorn became a hybrid of all of it. And as I think we discussed before this has both helped and hindered us. We are too punk for metalheads, too metal for punks, too noisy for some HC purists... so we just end up in some uncharted lands, which is fine. We just do our own thing and if people get it cool, if not that's cool too! I have had fun doing it. We have had fun doing it! We!!!! Not me! This is a band!! Ha ha.

MRR: So when you started playing music again did you feel like it was kind of a vehicle for your recovery? Not necessarily in the lyrics but just in the experience of playing being a release or whatever...

Omid: Hmmmmm... that is a good question!

MRR: Thank you...

Omid: I don't think I was conscious of it at the time, but I would say that in hindsight Battletorn has been a musical reflection of a lot of the struggle and hardships I have experienced in my life, both before and after getting sober. Life after getting sober has had just as many if not more frustrating and painful times as when I was using. But I am definitely better equipped to deal with them.



I meant to say that at the time of starting the band I wasn't conscious of it being a vehicle for those feelings. As time has gone on I have definitely become aware of it and even consciously used it to work through some of those hard times while writing some sick thrash! And it has helped me. Survival man, survival!

MRR: You mentioned the importance of friendship in the band. Do you feel like the friendship and collaboration is part of what makes the creation of music a healing experience. Would you consider it healing? Even though it's reopening old wounds sometimes

Omid: Yes to all of that. It is a healing experience, even when reopening old wounds. I would elaborate on that if you want but I think you hit the nail on the head!

MRR: So Reflect the Filth is the last Battletorn record. Do you think it's an appropriate end point? Why?

Omid: Absolutely an appropriate end point, no question. We have been going for five years, and have put out three LPs, a few singles, a couple splits and other miscellaneous releases. It's a body of work we are proud of and wanted to bookend. We didn't want to become one of those bands that put out records just because we could and tarnished our name. There are very few bands that just keep putting out good records forever, so we just made a decision to quit while we felt we were ahead. The Reflect the Filth album is a pinnacle musically, emotionally, and in all areas. We were riding the subway home after finishing the recording and just said to each other "man... that's a good place to stop."

MRR: What wounds are being healed or reopened on Reflect the Filth?

Omid: Hmmmm.... Well, it's mostly about the sickness and suffering that has permeated our lives and relationships. It's been a hard road in that area. And then the usual topics, death, violence, that sort of thing! The title track is one of the best Battletorn songs we have ever written in my opinion.

MRR: No Chance, No Loss what's that lyric about?

Omid: It captures everything that is and ever was Battletorn. Well, I hate to say it but that is about many of my relationships. Many of them had no chance, so in a way I see them as no loss... kind of a hard thing to admit but it's true. Maybe that makes it easier to accept the loss. I don't know. Don't make me cry.

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COLIN BRUNTON

The first wave of Toronto punk came to a crashing conclusion on December 1st, 1978 at Toronto's Horseshoe Tavern with the Last Pogo, where they had the final couple of gigs featuring the first Toronto punk bands. The Horseshoe had grown uncomfortable with the new genre of music that was being booked by the promoters, the Garys (Topp and Cormier), and as a result, they gavetThe Garys and the punk scene their walking papers. We got an opportunity to talk to Colin Brunton who caught this last show on film, resulting in the 26 minute movie The Last Pogo *which had remained underground for 30 years until the DVD release in 2008.*

Interview by Greg Dick

MRR: So you're a Toronto boy?

Colin Brunton: Yep. I started off in The Beaches, then I spent a couple of years in Scarborough, then the West End. When I was thirteen, I went out to the East End where I remained.

MRR: Did you go to high school out in the East End?

Colin Brunton: Yep. East York Collegiate.

MRR: What kind of bands were you getting into in high school?

Colin Brunton: This would have been the early '70s, so I still loved Led Zeppelin. I hate to admit it, but I was into Edgar Winter. I also liked bands like Humble Pie, but my real secret shame is Jethro Tull. Loved Alice Cooper. The bands that I really liked I got into when I was twelve or thirteen. Those were Alice Cooper and the Yardbirds. It started off with the British Invasion, and opened up to the Animals and the Kinks and all that stuff, and when I got into high school I was getting into Led Zep. The musical thing for me in high school was scoring this gig at The Original 99 Cent Roxy. Gary Topp hired me to work there. That's when I got really turned on to tons of awesome music, film, culture, and art and stuff. The best one was finding out about Roxy Music.

MRR: What was your first exposure to punk rock? A lot of us saw pictures first before we saw bands.

Colin Brunton: It depends on how far you want to go back.

MRR: I'm talking spiky hair, safety pins…

Colin Brunton: I don't think the spiky hair started until '79 or '80, but my first thing I guess—discounting an Iggy or Velvet Underground gig, would've been the Ramones when they came in September of '76. Obviously, months before that we were all getting a taste of it. Gary used to show this movie called *Blank Generation* at midnight shows at The New Yorker. It is a film by Amos Poe, a documentary on the New York punk scene, so you got a little taste of the Dead Boys, Ramones, Talking Heads, Television…all that, and you'd have to ask Gary himself this question, but I think that's what got him keenly interested; the first couple of shows he brought were the Ramones and John Cale, and then everything just kind of changed.

MRR: I started seeing pictures of a lot of the New York bands in *Rockscene* before they had records out. I know the movie *Blank Generation* was kind of interesting because the audio is not in sync with the footage, but it was the only way to see these bands at the time unless you lived in New York, which we didn't.

Colin Brunton: And if you were at The New Yorker at midnight watching *Blank Generation* and smoking weed, or being on some other thing, it didn't matter if it was in sync.

MRR: How did you meet The Garys?

Colin Brunton: I was a high school kid. The 99 Cent Roxy was *the* cool theatre to go to. Not just for awesome movies. There were double bills, different movies every night, and it was a fun place to go to. Gary Topp's presentation was unparalleled. As soon as you walked in the door, the show started. When you got into the theatre itself, it was the music he played, playing movie trailers without the sound but with rock music over it. It was a *buzz*. So, I hung out there, and what happened was that it started getting really busy when Gary brought *Reefer Madness*. He offered to pay me and a pal twenty bucks a night to watch the doors and make sure people weren't sneaking in, and it just kind of evolved from there. I continued to work with Gary there, then The New Yorker Theatre, and then at the Horseshoe. To work at the Roxy Theatre in high school was considered pretty awesome. It was the only movie theatre in Toronto where you could openly smoke dope. We experimented with marijuana there quite often.

MRR: You were hanging out with the Garys making sure everything was running smoothly?

Colin Brunton: Gary Cormier wasn't in the picture at the Roxy so it was just Gary Topp and a couple of other partners who didn't stick around that long. Then this guy named Jeff Silverman from Brooklyn came in and helped Gary run it. My job was great. I was taking tickets, and then as soon as I took the tickets I could go in and watch the movie, and just make sure I was out for the break. And occasionally throw people out of the theatre. We didn't tolerate people who drank or dealt drugs, so they could smoke all the dope they wanted to, but if we heard the clink of a bottle we would be down there figuring out who it was, and casually ask them to leave the theatre. We'd have to talk down people that were having bad acid trips. Our failsafe was the guys that hung out at the pool hall across the street, so if we ever got in big trouble they were there for the rescue. I remember once I had to throw this guy out that was on PCP or something. I had to sit on his chest, and he looked at me and he just started rising up, and I thought, "Fuck, I'm going to get killed here." Then Ducky, and Spike, and the boys from the pool hall came across and saved me.

Right: Colin with Joey Ramone
Photo by Tim Sebert

MRR: The crowd that you were seeing at the theatre, would you say that they might have been the foundation of the future punk scene?

Colin Brunton: A lot of the regulars ended up going to The New Yorker and the Horseshoe, and it wasn't so much a clique. It was a fantastic place to get this really wide taste of culture. It wasn't necessarily punk. Gary would show Roger Corman movies one night, and the next night a Buñuel double bill, and *always* new music. He'd just hear about bands before anyone else did. The kind of creativity it encouraged may have planted a seed in certain people's minds that continued on and contributed to the idea of punk. You can't measure how much influence Gary Topp has had on the counter culture in Toronto.

MRR: Gary went on to spearhead the Toronto punk scene, and I always found there were parallels between cinema, literature, and the first generation punk scene. I noticed in Hamilton the people at The Delta would pop up at Club David's and the Crash 'n' Burn. They're curious and they were looking for something a little cutting-edge, which I think is what a lot of those rep theatre type places were. Were there ever any gigs at The Roxy?

Colin Brunton: Probably one of the best shows I have ever seen was the first gig I ever saw at The Roxy by an awesome band called Breathless, which featured a very young—he must have been maybe seventeen-years-old—Nash The Slash, playing his electric viola. Later on, I remember a ten minute concert by Nash where he sat down—I think it was his premier gig as the *masked* Nash The Slash, and he did a live soundtrack to Dali and Buñuel's *Un Chien Andalou.* And you have to know that when people went to any weekend show at The Roxy they were ripped out of their minds. I remember sitting watching Nash and watching the audience, and everyone was leaning forward in their seats watching the movie, their jaws were just *dropped.* They couldn't believe this. It was unreal. He had a candelabra set up, and did trickery with his tape machines, which was so ahead of it's time. It was fantastic.

MRR: Why did the theatre close?

Colin Brunton: I think it was the rent. They didn't own the building. From what I can recall as a little stoned seventeen-year-old kid, I think it was a matter of however successful Gary was there, the landlords would up the rent, and I don't think they ever got a piece of the snack bar. That's how you make money at a movie theatre. The tickets were 99 cents and the thing would sell out every weekend. After a while they just couldn't make any money, so they moved on to The New Yorker and leased the place off of a guy called Bennet Fode. It was kind of the same deal as The Roxy: Different movies every night, midnight shows, stuff like that.

Nash The Slash was the first manager, and I was his assistant for about the first year. We would take turns going to the basement, having a puff of weed, and then taking off to Funland to play pinball. (Sorry Gary!) I remember one day Gary and Jeff needed to get the snack bar fixed and they called in this carpenter. This long-haired, bearded guy came in and did an excellent job, and he and Gary just hit it off. That was Gary Cormier. He had some experience managing Rough Trade, but had gotten out of the business, and I think meeting Gary Topp... they were kindred spirits. They both got excited about doing this stuff and the next thing you know they built a stage and started bringing in all these bands. They became known as the Garys. It was very exciting. That's where it happened. I am pretty certain the first one was the Ramones although it could have been Ali Akbar Khan, a sitar player. It was one of those two and then John Cale was probably the second or third person.

It was all just mind- blowing. The thing about The New Yorker that was awesome was that it was a small theatre with 500 seats, so *any* seat was a great seat. What made it more intimate was the fact that there was no back stage, and so the bands would have to walk from the basement through the lobby and down the aisle. You would just hear this *buzz* starting because everyone in the back would say, "Hey, here comes John Cale!" or whatever, and the applause would build and go to the front like a wave, and then they would leave the same way—off the stage, walk up the aisle, through the lobby, and down into the furnace room.

MRR: The first time the Ramones played was with Johnny Lovesin. Tell us about that show.

Colin Brunton: It was great. I don't know if you can get a show much more exciting than the first Ramones show. It was Johnny Lovesin and His Invisible Band, which means that it was Johnny Lovesin solo. And he was great! What balls to go and open for this band that everybody was so excited about.

MRR: I didn't see the first Ramones show. I went the second time when they had the Dead Boys open for them.

Colin Brunton: We were excited. They didn't let us down. Three shows man. Five bucks a ticket. The Garys probably never made a nickel off of it. They couldn't sell out the three shows. I think they did a total of 1,300 tickets. Peter Gabriel walked out after the first ten minutes of the show muttering, "This is bullshit." We were thinking, "This is un-fucking-*believable*!" It was such an assault, and it was so different and faster and crazier than anything you'd heard up until that point.

MRR: The second time they came the Dead Boys played with them. Were there more people the second time around?

Colin Brunton: I am pretty certain that one was sold out. That was the Dead Boys, the Poles, and the Ramones. The nasty Dead Boys... They came quite a few times. I interviewed Cheetah a couple of summers ago at a cemetery for this project that I've been working on for a couple of years. When we were at The New Yorker, Gary and Jeff got me to clean up what would be the dressing room. I would take this muriatic acid and splash it on the wall, and then hide my nose away from it, then scrub it with this brush and try and clean this whole brick wall. We tried to make this crappy basement into a dressing room and we got it looking okay, and then the Dead Boys came and trashed it in, like, an hour! When I interviewed Cheetah, I called him on it, and it was funny because he was just *so* apologetic. "I'm *so* sorry. Did we really destroy it?" "Yes. Yes you did." "I'm *so* sorry man". The Dead Boys were bad boys.

MRR: During the time that The New Yorker was happening, what other clubs or hangouts were there back then?

Colin Brunton: It is hard to track it all. In '76 or '77 I think the first one that popped up was the Colonial Underground, and there was the Turning Point, David's, and I believe that the Crash 'n' Burn didn't start until the following summer. Then it seemed like a new club would

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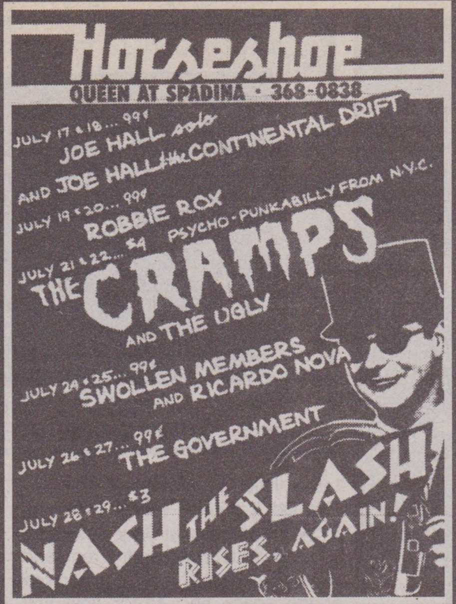
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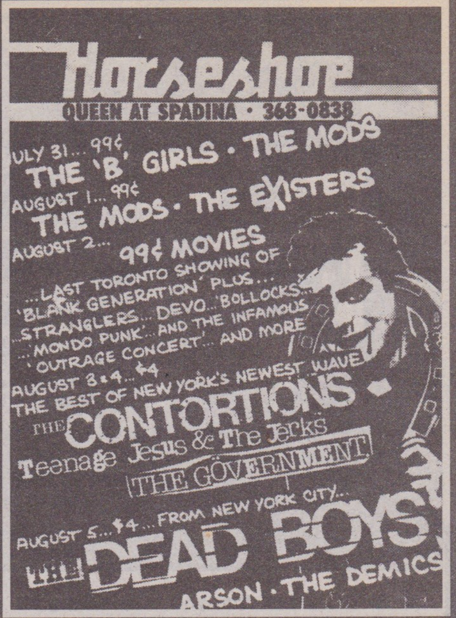
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pop up over night. You'd hear, "Go to so-and-so address on Yonge Street," and there would be a band in a flat above a store, and you brought your own beer or bought it there like a speakeasy. They'd last for maybe a weekend and then they'd disappear.

MRR: Who was the first Toronto punk band you ever saw?

Colin Brunton: I remember it was with Gary and Gary after a shift at The New Yorker. "Come on, let's close it up and check out Steven Leckie's new band at the Colonial Underground."

MRR: What was Steve's band called?

Colin Brunton: The Viletones. Not the Dialtones. The Viletones. It was something to behold. It was like nothing we had ever seen before.

MRR: Would it be safe to say that they were the first Toronto punk band?

Colin Brunton: I can't really think of anyone else who came before them. The Ramones were September 24th, 1976, and it seemed like a week or two later this whole thing started. All of a sudden you started seeing handbills on telephone poles in the city, which you had never seen before. All of a sudden there was this *thing* happening. Steve Leckie was the first. It was an awesome show. It was one of my favorite shows of my life. It was just so anarchic and chaotic.

MRR: When did the idea hit you that you could become a filmmaker?

Colin Brunton: I think about one second before I said, "Hey Gary, I want to make a film about this Last Pogo show you're doing."

MRR: So that was a little later on from the time that we are talking about?

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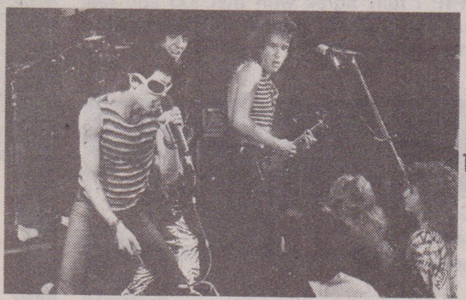

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Colin Brunton: I was fumbling around trying to figure out what I wanted to do, and I wasn't super ambitious or anything. I took a filmmaker's weekend course at this place called the Toronto Filmmaker's Co-op, and made a little movie with Elizabeth Aikenhead called *Bollocks*. It was a little five minute thing where we went to Club David's and shot the Viletones, and then we just shot some goofy stuff. We re-created the front cover of the first Stranglers album with a rat, and I made one of those giant safety pins that you could wear like an arrow-through-the-head kind of gag, and that kind of gave me a taste for it. I started driving a cab and one night I pulled up in front of the Horseshoe to pop in and say hi to Gary, and I heard Andrew Paterson talking to the Garys saying, "Hey this Last Pogo sounds like a great idea."

MRR: And Andrew Paterson was a member of the Government?

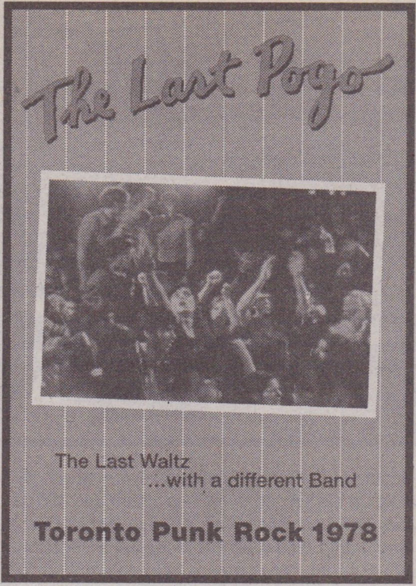
Colin Brunton: Yeah. I just heard him muttering in his way, and I was pretty certain that I may have been experimenting with marijuana in my cab that night, and I grandly announced without really thinking about it, "Hey that sounds like a really cool thing to make a film about." I left it at that. I finished my shift and the next morning I got up and it still sounded like a good idea. I pulled it together somehow.

MRR: Did you work at the Horseshoe?

Colin Brunton: Gary was the most awesome guy to work for. When I started working for him I was seventeen, and it was just such a big influence on me. To this day, the way I treat my crews on film and TV shows is much the way Gary treated me. Do your job and relax, and get it done. It was very loose. By the time we got to the Horseshoe he asked me if I wanted to work here and I said, "For sure. So what do I do?" He was like, "I don't know, whatever." "Uh...do you want me to take tickets?" "Oh, no. We'll have people for that". "Do you want me to bus tables?" "No there're people for that, too." "So what do I do?" "I don't know. Just hang out." So I just kind of hung out. Then I started making the handbills. I made all the posters, and then I went and stapled them up around town. Sometimes it would cost more to make the poster...back in those days when you made a handbill you had to cut with scissors and paste with glue. If I had white letraset I would scratch it to make it look distressed, and then if I wanted to make it bigger or if I wanted to make it black instead, I'd get on my bike and go to this place called Midtown Reproduction in Yorkville. I'd drop it off, tell them what I wanted, come back either three hours or a day later, get the new artwork, spend ten bucks on that, and occasionally realize I made a really stupid typo. It would take forever. I think they paid me 50 bucks a handbill, which back in those days was really generous. But sometimes I would end up paying more to *make* the handbill.

MRR: What were some of your favorite gigs at the Horseshoe?

Colin Brunton: One of my favorites was Edie the Egg Lady. Edie was famous for being in John Waters' *Pink Flamingoes*. She was the obese elderly woman who sat in the crib waiting for the egg man to come by. She came to town and she had some poetry, and it was one of those



spontaneous catch-lightning-in-a-bottle things. The Garys arranged for the Viletones to back her up, so it was Chris Hate, Motor Mike, and Freddie Pompeii. They met Edie that afternoon and she told them what she wanted to do, and it was awesome. She did her big hit, "Hey Punks Get off the Grass." Another show I really loved was Suicide.

MRR: Was that the night with Destroy All Monsters and Teenage Head? The triple bill that went three nights?

Colin Brunton: The Suicide show that stands out to me is the one that they may have done by themselves. There were very few people at the Horseshoe; there were maybe a dozen people. Alan Vega is pretty intense, and we were standing there, and we had grins ear to ear watching him because the guy was just so entertaining and so different. Every so often you would get these stragglers that would wander in. I remember there was this table of what you might perceive as university jocks sitting at this table having a few beers and yapping off to Alan Vega. At one point Vega jumped off the stage and marched up to the table and put his face about one inch away from the loudest jock's face, and keeping totally in time with Martin Rev's, synthesizer screamed "*I wanna fucking kill you!*" The guy never said another word. The Contortions were awesome. The Cramps were great. The Stranglers. Richard Hell. The Dead Boys always. The thing is, you look at the handbills from those days, and it was nine months, seven nights a week. It's hard to believe.

MRR: Were there any bands wanting to play The Last Pogo that were turned down?

Colin Brunton: The one I remember of course was Mickey de Sadist from the Forgotten Rebels...

MRR: ...who does a cameo in the film?

Colin Brunton: Yeah, well we finished the shooting of the thing and we thought we should get a few interviews with people. We went down to New Rose which was the punk record/clothing store run by Freddie Pompeii and Margarita Passion. We interviewed the both of them. Mickey was there and he was jokingly bitching about the fact that the Forgotten Rebels didn't get to play The Last Pogo. We

decided to interview him and he was great. He held up his Forgotten Rebels album and told us that The Last Pogo was "one big farce," that it was stupid, and he did a Mods impersonation. We thought, "We *have* to keep this guy in for sure now." He was just too funny.

MRR: That night the Viletones pirated the stage and weren't expected to play. They took Teenage Head's gear. I know Sam was playing Steve Mahon's bass upside down, which Sam had some trouble with, but they still pulled off a fantastic set.

Colin Brunton: Plus, it's always good when you play a bass guitar to, y'know, plug it in. I don't remember very much of that evening at all. I was trying to make this film with a few camera people, and I was a little shell-shocked. I remember getting pushed outside. I remember talking my way past the fire chief, or the cop, or whoever it was that told us we had to leave. Apart from that, I'm drawing a blank on the whole evening. I'm glad I made the film so that I can remember it. Or at least 26 minutes of it.

MRR: The place was way oversold. Did you expect that kind of a turn out?

Colin Brunton: I think everyone in the scene was pretty excited about the gig. We thought it was probably going to sell out, we just didn't expect that there were going to be an extra 300 people that would make their way through the doors. It ended up being pretty chaotic, but again, I don't even remember where I was standing that night, or what I was doing. I think I was behind the sound board and occasionally walking up to a camera person. The only thing I really remember is being out on the sidewalk and hearing the riot and thinking, "I can't believe I'm stuck out here on the sidewalk." And then I was thinking, "Where's the sound guy?" Someone said he was still inside recording, so at least we captured the noise of the riot, and shot the aftermath.

MRR: Did the scene change much from last Ramones gigs at The New Yorker to the Last Pogo? There's a time span of almost two years.

Colin Brunton: The Ramones came in '76 and I remember when the show was over me and a couple of buddies that worked there were thinking, "Wow they had *black jeans*." You couldn't buy black jeans in Toronto. There was a big concern about it. "Man, we can't be *hippies*. We can't wear blue jeans. We gotta get black jeans from somewhere." So one of the differences by the time the Pogo came around is that people were getting a bit more into the whole fashion thing. For the first couple of years Toronto wasn't as fashion conscious as New York or London were, and I think after that it changed a bit more.

MRR: Who do you think had the strongest performances at The Last Pogo?

Colin Brunton: The first night, as much as I loved certain bands there, I think the best performance was from the Secrets. They were playing down the street at the Beverley. They literally ran from a gig at the Beverley down to the Horseshoe, and just ran up on stage and did their show. And you can tell they were pumped with adrenalin when they did their bit. It was a bit odd because they did some a capella, and it was more like an edgy rhythm and blues band. The Viletones were always exciting no matter what. You never knew what Steven was going to do. Cardboard Brains, the Mods and the UGLY were good. I like the Scenics, but they had the opening gig, and they didn't have a huge following. And it's pretty hard to beat a band coming on during a riot—there were people standing on tables and playing with the lights when Teenage Head hit the stage.

MRR: That was just incredible, those last twenty minutes in the Horseshoe. I'll never forget it. Walking through there with my buddy looking at piles of wood from these chairs that would have taken ten chainsaws to break apart, but somehow all these skinny little kids just destroyed everything. It was just amazing. In the movie why is the sound for Teenage Head so muddy?

Colin Brunton: What happened was that back in those days Teenage Head were managed by a guy who was very protective of his band and wouldn't allow Comfort Sound to record them. All we had to go off of for that moment was our tape recorder with our sound guy, so we just couldn't get good sound. And in fact, at that point we couldn't get much footage of them either because we couldn't get to the stage, so we had to do our best to cut and paste together what we had.

MRR: Tell me about the interviews in *The Last Pogo*. You already touched on the one with Mickey de Sadist. One of my favorites was the one you did with the Viletones, with the famous quote from Tony Torcher, the drummer.

Colin Brunton: I knew Leckie and I thought, "How am I going to get a rise out of Steven Leckie? What is the stupidest question I could ask?" So I said, "Are the people that come to the Viletones shows laid back?" That just set him off, and he said, "No they are *not* laid back," and Tony came up with the line "People change. It's like a hit of heroin."

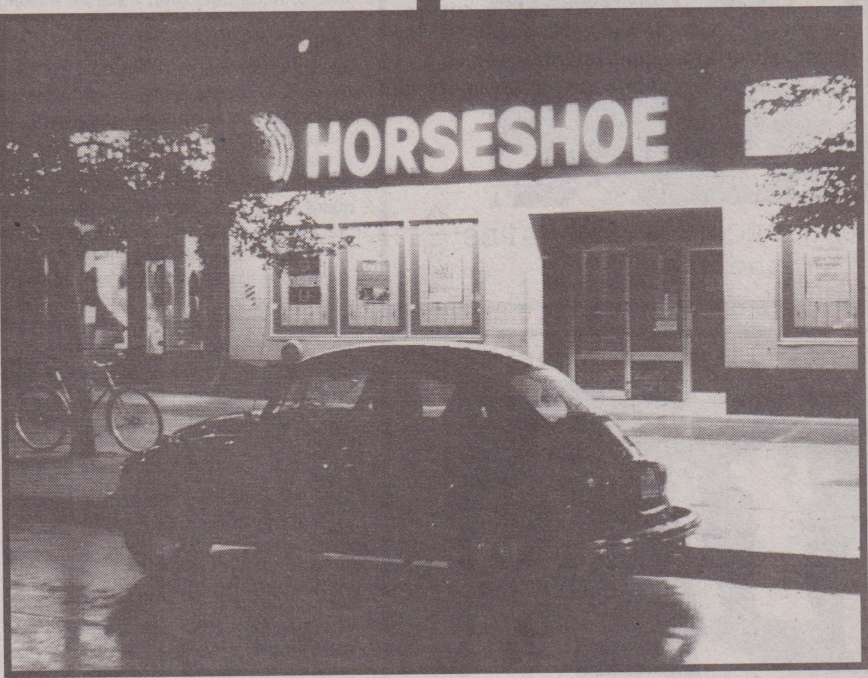
MRR: I think he said "The Viletones are like a hit of junk." I loved that, but I think they were more like a hit of speed. Tell me about the Teenage Head interview. They finish off the movie.

Colin Brunton: I asked them an honest question. I said "Do you guys think you'll be doing this five years from now?" They cracked a joke, and it's kind of funny because they went on to do it for another 30 years, which is pretty amazing.

MRR: The Last Pogo was billed as the last punk show ever. Was it?

Colin Brunton: It was the last punk show at the Horseshoe Tavern when it was run by the Garys. I really think that you can't peg a day that the punk scene started in Toronto. You can't peg a day when it ended. For my purposes, for the new project I'm doing, I'm saying that the punk scene started when the Ramones came in '76, and I think the first real wave of the punk scene ended the night of the Last Pogo, December 1, 1978.

MRR: I fully agree with that. Do you feel that the Toronto scene was overlooked internationally?



Above: Horseshoe Tavern Photo by Michael Korican

Colin Brunton: Absolutely. There weren't enough clever people in the record industry. The press was kind of amused by it. Look at some of the CBC archival stuff of interviewing The Viletones. I mean it was much the same attitude as the American media when they got onto Elvis, and the rock'n'roll thing started in the States. They just thought it was a passing fancy. The thing about London and New York is they got a lot more attention because there're a lot more people. There's a lot more press, and maybe they had smarter people. Toronto back then was still so provincial and small-town that we just didn't have the coverage. Luckily for me and this new thing that I'm doing, there were also a lot of really talented and creative people in the audience that night. I have so many fantastic photographs by people like Edie Steiner, Don Pyle, Ross Taylor, and a few others. There was a fantastic scene and no one paid attention to it.

MRR: I think that's changing now. The one thing I enjoy seeing with the Toronto scene is not just the enthusiasm within our own city, but I think the people around the world are starting to pay attention. The release of the movie is certainly going to help that. What did the promoters the Garys do after the Horseshoe?

Colin Brunton: They started The Edge. They took over an old pub. I think it was an old Ryerson student pub called Edgerton's. They renamed it The Edge and it was a much smaller room, and they continued on bringing in their favorite bands.

MRR: Did you work there?

Colin Brunton: No I didn't. I did the handbills. I was driving a cab. I had this vague notion that I was going to keep making films somehow.

MRR: That was another incredible place. You could see the Only Ones on Sunday and Ultravox with the Mods on Monday. Seven nights a week. It was just incredible. The public debut of *The Last Pogo* was at the Danforth Music Hall a long time ago with the Toronto debut of the Buzzcocks, Gang of Four, and The Viletones' debut as a rockabilly band. How did that go?

Colin Brunton: It went great. Gary put a screen in front of the stage so when one band ended the movie started, and you could kind of vaguely see the band behind the screen getting set. I was *so* nervous. In 26 minutes I smoked five cigarettes. I just wanted to get the thing over with. I was in the projection room sweating up a storm, puffing away. It went over great. To the Toronto audience it wasn't that much of a big deal. These were their bands they saw all the time, so the film got no attention when I finished it.

MRR: How were the reviews for the film? Were there any?

Colin Brunton: The only review I managed to get was—and this was after a couple of letters that I wrote to Peter Goddard— and finally he came through and wrote quite a nice article about the film in the *Toronto Star*. But I couldn't sell it. No one wanted to show it. The New Music wanted it for nothing. When they couldn't get it for nothing they picked up some British punk special instead. I just thought, "Fuck you." They did relent a year later and showed it three times.

MRR: Typical Toronto back then. It has changed a little now. Ignoring their own scene.

Colin Brunton: It hasn't changed that much. Let's face it.

MRR: Did the film get any international exposure?

Colin Brunton: Funnily enough it got picked up by New Line Cinema. One of my trips down to New York I decided to pop in unannounced and ask them how the film was doing. Gary Topp had a friend in California who was an assistant camera guy who I admired because he had actually gotten into the business, which was very romantic to me. He told Gary that he saw a film of this Last Pogo at a midnight show in San Francisco. So, I went to New York and I walked into New Line's office and I said, "I want to see the books on my film." I looked at the books and I said, "What about the San Francisco gig?", and they hemmed and hawed, and I sat in the lobby for about an hour and a half, and then I left that day with all my film prints. They tore up the contract. It was over. I think I made $36.

MRR: It has had rave reviews in *Maximum Rocknroll* and the alternative press. I think that the way things are with the internet these days I have a feeling that the thing will get exposure. You had started filming the bonus footage for the DVD that's coming out, but it turned into a whole other project. You just started meeting all these people that were involved in the scene back in the day, and you found out that there was just so much and they were so interesting. Tell me about that.

Colin Brunton: It's kind of endless. The reason why I thought...well, the rights for *The Last Pogo* were tied up for ten years, and when I got them back I took a look at the film and thought, "Wow, this really holds up." At the same time I had this awesome camera that I'd managed to get, my son Ollie was thirteen, and I thought, "Maybe I should just take the summer off and we can go out with the camera and start tracking down some of the people from *The Last Pogo* and find out what they are up to," and it evolved from there. Now I have created a monster! I have to end this soon. I have to admit that I'm getting kind of tired of it because I have a family, and I have to work, so I kind of sneak time in. But it's still fun.

MRR: This is just a side project for you. You are working on *Little Mosque on the Prairie* and so many other things so...

Colin Brunton: Yeah, so it has kind of turned into this monstrous hobby and it's fun, but I just want to get it done. I think I have about two to three hundred hours of footage and there're still a couple of dozen people I feel like I *really* have to get that represent that period that I love—1976 to '78 in Toronto. That's what the new film is. We're going to use the original Last Pogo as the spine, and we will re-meet people that you saw in *The Last Pogo* and find out what they're doing now.

MRR: What is it going to be called?

Colin Brunton: *The Last Pogo Jumps Again.*

MRR: Are the Garys going to be involved in this upcoming *Last Pogo* show?

Colin Brunton: I don't think they're officially involved, but I know for sure that Gary Topp is going to be there. I haven't talk to Cormier, but the Garys have to come for sure or it's almost ludicrous.

MRR: Will it be filmed or recorded?

Colin Brunton: Yeah, both. When I say "filmed", I've toyed with the notion that I can pull some 16mm together for this, but I'm not *quite* as stupid as I was when I was 23, when I made *The Last Pogo*. I am not that much *smarter*, but not quite as dumb. I don't know if I want to jump 40 grand in debt to film this.

MRR: When do you anticipate the release of *The Last Pogo Jumps Again*?

Colin Brunton: 2010 for sure.

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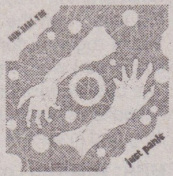

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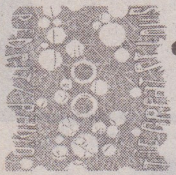

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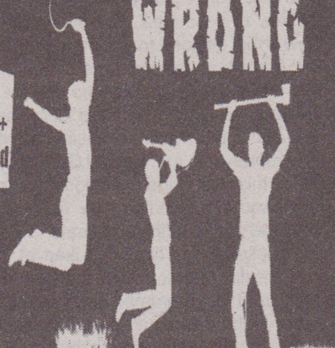

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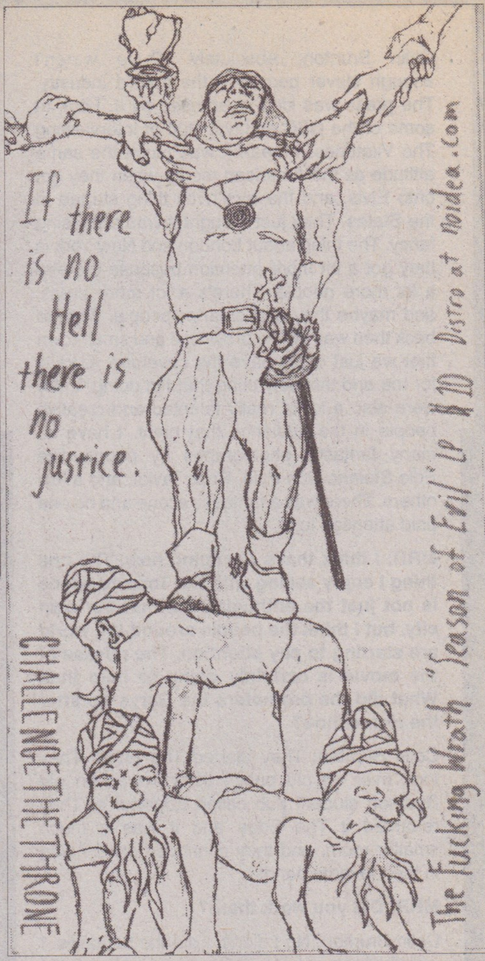

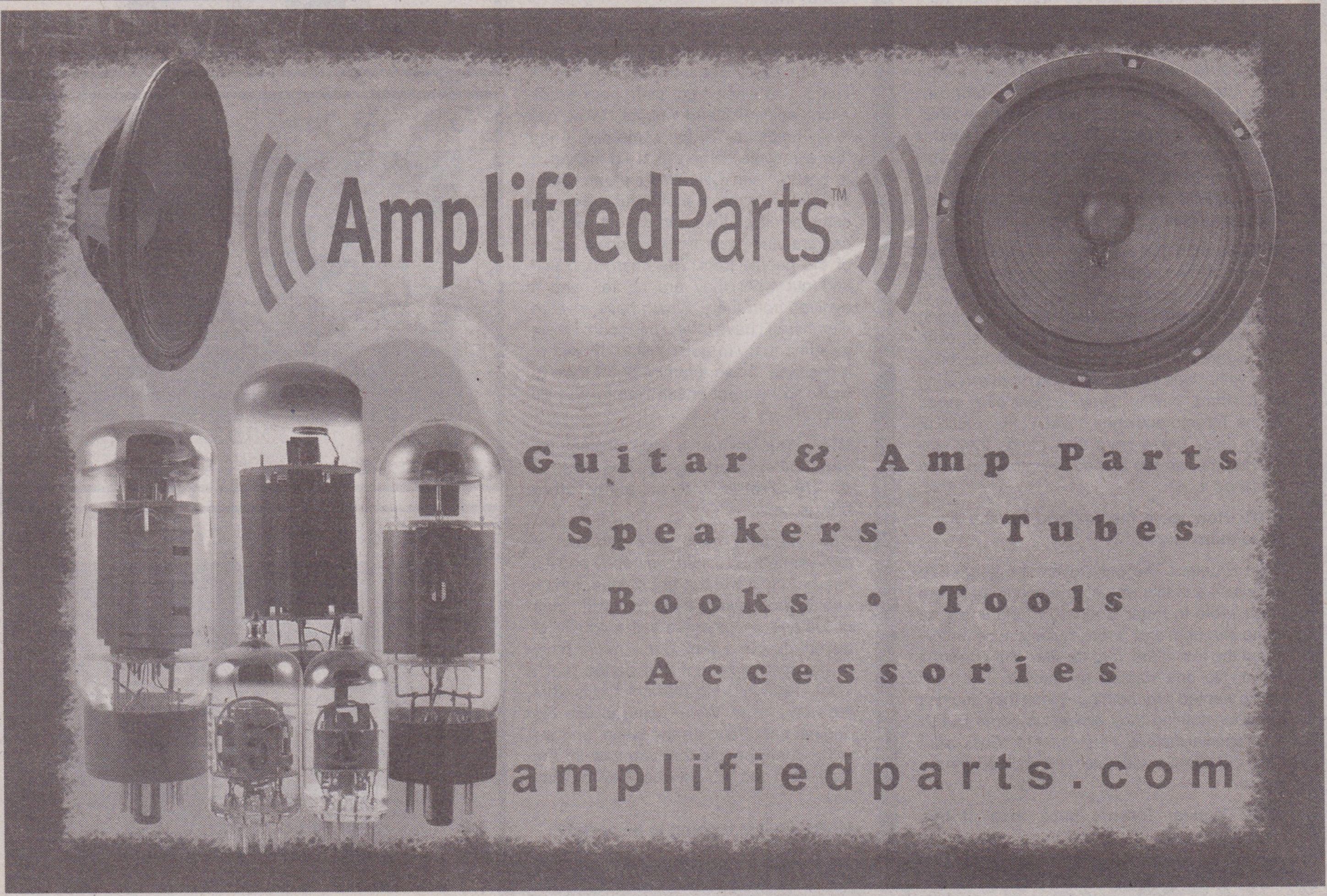

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ATTENTAT ★ SONORE ★

Attentat Sonore hails from Limoges, France, somewhere halfway between Paris and Bordeaux. It's a bit isolated from the bigger cities; if you want to see touring bands in Paris, Bordeaux or Dijon you need to drive some hundred miles. A couple of years ago, I heard a song by Attentat Sonore on a free compilation CD by the French magazine Punk Rawk and they immediately caught my attention with their way cool punk rock style and dual vocals. So we got in touch and to my complete surprise, I was able to meet some really enthusiastic and very active punks in Limoges. Guitarist Raf and his wife Murielle, one of the singers of Attentat Sonore, are involved in numerous supportive activities in Limoges; organizing shows in their hometown (Listen! Bands on tour in Europe: if you're planning to tour Spain and you're coming from up north in Europe, then you should definitely get in touch with Raf about playing Limoges!), running a record store, doing a fanzine and a weekly punk rock radio show. The people in Limoges are extremely nice, active and politically/ socially aware. They've got their punk rock hearts in the right place! Along with that, Attentat Sonore has been playing since 1988, so it's about time to introduce this band to MRR readers! Allez-allez!
Interview by Helge Schreiber / Germany
Photos by Laurent Lagarde and Murielle

MRR: Attentat Sonore is one of the longest going punk bands in France. Would you please introduce yourself, give us some band history and tell us who's in the band? How's life at the "Bords de Vienne"?
Raf: We are Attentat Sonore, I am Raf, and I have been playing guitar in the band since it started, before the first demo in 1988. Back then, we were a two-piece band with random help from other people and playing with a drum machine. It was pretty chaotic and unplanned, really. Don't waste your time checking the old recordings. This formula changed when I moved to Limoges, I started to search for other people; I found Loulou (bass) and later Marie (vocals). They are still good friends of ours, but very busy with their 3 kids! So, we got a drummer, then another, then to Stef, who still is doing the job after several years. At the same time, Ray entered the picture on vocals. We later had to replace Loulou on bass with Laurent, then with his girlfriend Eva. Marie moved on to other projects and Murielle sings now (her first recording ever was the "Barricades 1905" 7"). Over the years we played around, we recorded by ourselves, with our friends. We tried our best to show there is an alternative to business-rock. Eh eh! Life on the Bords de Vienne is OK… and we want to keep it as it is now, or make it better.

MRR: We don't get much information about French scene here in Germany, so it would be cool to hear more about what's going on in France. Could you tell us about the French DIY punk rock scene? What is the status on squats or autonomous centers?
Raf: Hell, we sure wish we had more squats, but there are only a few, and most of them are short-lived experiences; soon evicted by cops. The best and oldest one is Les Tanneries in Dijon where we played a couple of times. It is a huge concert venue, with interesting activities besides, like the ones you have in German squats. In Paris it is difficult to maintain squats. As far as I know, they only last a couple of months. One called La Miroiterie is going to be closed soon. It's a pity, as they were pretty active gig-wise. Towns that formerly had many squats, like in Grenoble or Lyon, have had the same difficulties. I guess Fortress Europe has the same rules everywhere, now.

MRR: How would you characterize your band? Is Attentat Sonore more like a political band who is based in the DIY scene?
Raf: I think one could say that. The band shares some points of view with the political scene, plays benefits (like for Anarchist Black Cross, arrested demonstrators, anti-racist organizations, etc. or the Parisian independent radio FPP) or supports different organizations in one way or another. That doesn't mean we are willing to abandon our freedom of thinking, of course. We like the idea to play in different

networks and meet different people who sometimes don't mix with each other; we don't like ghettos at all. And I am not talking about playing major venues, eheh, just mixing the crowds and getting over the labels. Next support gig is the Lemovice Antifa Fest 5 for Anarchists against the Wall, in our town.

MRR: What would you say are your musical and lyrical influences?
Raf: Musically, it is a bit difficult to say, since we like so many bands and different styles of music. We've been labeled with a lot of names, but we like being called simply a punk band then people can form their own opinion when they hear our music and lyrics. We have dual vocals and we like bands with female vocalists. Let's just say we are playing punk songs in a '77 style, rougher songs somewhere between street punk and early hardcore: simple and straight to the point. We covered songs ranging from the Partisans, Poison Idea, 7 Seconds, the Oppressed, Kidnap, Rattus, SOIA... Our lyrics have no particular influence from any band, really. We like both serious lyrics and more cynical ones; sometimes just painful, hateful lyrics!

MRR: How many shows have you played in the past? Have you been on any tours yet?
Raf: We've played cool shows, but we cannot afford to be out of town for too long. All five of us have responsibilities here, either family stuff or jobs or others... For a couple of years now, we try to play as often as we can afford, and we did a 5 day tour in 2007 in France, Switzerland, Germany and Belgium. We are doing another one this year in Switzerland, France and Germany. In the meantime, we went to play for some unofficial Ladyfests in Brussels, and Barcelona along with our usual gigs in France during 2007 and 2008. We opened for bands like Flux Of Pink Indians, the U.K. Subs, Operation S, Burning Heads, Oi Polloi, Real Mc Kenzies, D.O.A., the Hard–Ons, and more! We are always happy to play with other bands in other places.

MRR: Attentat Sonore is from Limoges. Could you tell us more about the activities in your hometown? I've heard that you're booking shows there, how long has that been going on?
Raf: We can't complain too much about our town, there are tons of cool gigs every year and it's always fun. Sometimes the venues are packed, sometimes not, but I guess that's the same everywhere. We've been booking DIY gigs here since 1994. The most difficult part was in the late '90s/early 2000s when the scene was dying everywhere and there were no more cool bars. People were not going out anymore, or maybe they were busy raising their kids. Anyways, once we found a cool bar, we organized a couple of gigs again. First, Attila the Stockbroker and Barnstormer, then the Lower Class Brats, Bonehouse, the Nitwitz, the Varukers... and the wheel started to turn again! A new generation of people came, kids started bands again, and they had places and gigs to play again. It was great to witness these positive things. And it's not finished yet!

MRR: Since early 2007, there has been a DIY record store in Limoges. Could you give us some information on the store?
Raf: Actually, there are other record stores in town, but none had the spirit we like to find in a store. None were carrying independent releases, for example. So we combined forces with several associations and friends to open and maintain the store. It's called Undersounds and its been 100% volunteer run now for over one year. Currently, a friend is working there and there are still people volunteering, of course. We opened it in January of 2007. It's doing ok and we are happy with it. It's what the local scene was lacking. You can find all info about bands and local gigs, fanzines, self-released records, and, of course, a large variety of new and used records, including lots of vinyl. This way we can expose people to releases from local bands and we can help releasing a couple of records. We did a compilation CD called "Limoges Punx" with the idea of promoting the local scene. You can find rock music, punk, reggae, postpunk, hardcore, some metal, some oldies... Well, we like the place, it has built alliances between quite a few people which is great to have.

MRR: And how about that record fair in Limoges?
Raf: Well, our fifth annual record fair was in early April, "Broc'n'Roll," which is a play on words with *brocante*, which is like a flea market, and rock'n'roll. It was great! With people coming from all around, sometimes as far as Paris or Bordeaux, it was a success. No big money involved in it, only passionate people looking for good music, DJ's all day and a good atmosphere. On the last night, there was a gig with D.O.A. and our local mates, Sideburns Sweat; it was a cool way to finish the party!

MRR: You also run a record label, Guerilla Vinyl. What bands have you released so far and do you have any ethical guidelines in terms of what you put out or how you run a label?
Raf: Is this a proper label? I don't know. I just helped release a couple of records over the years, Désert Culturel / Skinny Boys in 1993, Conflict / Kochise double 7" in 1996. The same year Panx released our split 7" with Scraps, we helped under the name Guerilla Vinyl, as an extension of my 'zine, *Guérilla Urbaine*. In the end, the label survived over the 'zine! Most releases are our bands, but lately, we helped re-release the GO! "Your Power Means Nothing" 7", which I consider a classic of the NYHC scene. Also, the Kismet HC / Happy Bastards split 7" with limited edition artwork. Ethics: releasing only what we find interesting to be released, that's the way we like it.

MRR: Do you collaborate with any other record labels?
Raf: Yes, we always did; particularly with Maloka, who helped release the last three vinyl releases. For the brand new one, which exists on CD digipak and vinyl, there's an interesting mix of labels involved: there is Maloka (releases of Inner Terrestrials, La Fraction, Kochise, Conflict, Hard Skin etc.), Mass Productions (Raw Power, Varukers, Bonehouse, etc.), FZM (aka Folklore de la Zone Mondiale) which is ex-Bérurier Noir members' label (Lucrate Milk, Witch Hunt, BxN, and more), and Kawaii, another friend from Lyon (French DIY HC label), and ourselves. That's a great mix covering the French scene from its '80s roots to the new emerging DIY HC scene, so we are happy to gather these people around us.

MRR: And what about the punk rock radio show you're doing? With whom are you doing the show and how wide is the reach?

Raf: The show is done by our singers Ray and Murielle, and myself. It is on air every Monday (19H-20H) on www.beaubfm.org, and you can hear it locally on 89.0 FM. Internet broadcasting brings more interest, I believe. In the beginning of each show, older songs are played and discussed, and then we play newer stuff. Sometimes, we have guests; you have been one! We had Los Fastidios and the Epoxies in the studio, too. That's always fun. We like this media a lot. Radio was the medium that had brought punk rock to our attention! So we hope that some kids will discover some cool bands, thanks to this show. Who knows?

MRR: Earlier this decade you had your song "Bords de Vienne" on a compilation CD, which came with the *Punk Rawk* magazine (full color glossy, pro-made punk magazine which was sold nationwide at every newspaper stand). It seems like that Attentat Sonore, who was more known in the DIY-scene before, got introduced to a wider audience in France. Have you gotten more attention since that time?

Raf: It had helped us a little back then. We realized when playing live that people were familiar with this song in particular, which is good, of course. Having a couple of reviews helped a little too. Nothing huge of course, but it's always good to hear from people or getting some unexpected support, you know what I mean! I think you do. Actually, *Punk Rawk* doesn't exist anymore; one of the main editors, Frank, started his own 'zine called *Slow Death*, it's very well done…back to the roots. He was responsible for the huge and great *Violence* 'zine in the early '90s. Some people were criticizing *Punk Rawk* for being too mainstream. Well, I guess it was good to have a mag available all around France; being a small-town punk in my youth, I was happy to buy anything about music, before I had discovered fanzines.

MRR: Attentat Sonore has played some great festivals. Do you have any special memories about certain festivals that stick in your mind?

Raf: We like playing with bands, whoever they are, some became great friends, like René Binamé and Medef Inna Babylone. The first big fest for us was with these 2 bands, plus Neophyte, and Los Fastidios. It was also the first time we played to a 500 plus crowd. It was exciting of course, but kinda frightening too! I have other great memories from Dijon, where we always have fun with all the friends of Maloka and the people who come to their shows. Brussels and Barcelona were great too. And, of course, the Lemovice Antifa Fest this year was awesome with lots of bands we really like, Nabat, Wunderbach, Sham 69, Two Tone Club… a great party which lasted til Monday around 7a.m., eheh. Viva Easter. It is always good to meet with friends, and playing with your band is the best way to meet them. I mean visiting friends or being visited is great, but fests are the way to meet several of them at the same time. One thing we realized lately is that we shared the stage with many bands we loved since our youth, Métal Urbain, Wunderbach, Conflict, Oi Polloi, GBH, Flux of Pink Indians, MDC, UK Subs, Oberkampf, Raw Power, and now Sham, Nabat; that's incredible when you think of it. We were just kids getting crazy while listening to these bands. Who would have guessed these bands would still be around today and that we could play with them? We are damn lucky, and we appreciate all the support received from many friends over the years.

MRR: You also do your own fanzine. Could you tell us more about your 'zine? How many issues you have done so far and what do you cover in the 'zine?

Raf: To be honest, my 'zine *Guérilla Urbaine* has been kinda sleepy for a couple of years. I helped a couple of other 'zines with a few interviews, but I don't have time to publish the 'zine anymore. It was kinda slow, only nine issues published, but it had its moment. Two issues were printed and sold over 500 copies, the next ones were photocopied again, but selling OK. I had the pleasure meeting and interviewing bands and activists I was very curious about, or that I loved, like Scraps, Verdun, *New Wave* fanzine/label, *Panx*, Pin Prick, Oncle Slam, Flitox, Henry Rollins, 7 Seconds, Murphy's Law, Agnostic Front, Life… But How to Live It?, and many more. It was fun and I liked the artwork/layout part, but I am too slow and busy now! I published "newer" interviews on a website, if you are interested: guerillaurbaine.free.fr. The interviews include Frank from the Feederz, Violent Society, Riot/Clone, CMX, Swellbellys, and, of course, Sado Nation, which was a work shared with you.

MRR: What are the people of Attentat Sonore doing besides playing in the band? Your wife Murielle, for example, is a great photographer. Could she tell us more about her photos and where they can be seen? And what about those postcard sets?

Raf: Ray is working as a cook and in markets, meaning he often works on weekends, which is not easy for playing out of town. Stef was a cook too, but for a big hospital. Now he is training and studying to become a male nurse. Eva is still studying English and music. She is the youngest member of the band. Murielle works full time as a photographer for a local newspaper now. She takes

a lot of concert photos as well, and you can see her work on her Flickr.com site: www.flickr.com/mumudiy. She really enjoys it, and you can find great pics of bands like the Buzzcocks, D.O.A., Sham 69, Frustration, and tons more, including the local scene, of course. The postcard set was a collective work, nice job, maybe to be continued and not only focused on the music. Murielle showed her work in a couple of exhibitions, too.

MRR: You're working as a teacher. Which classes/courses do you teach? Have you gotten the chance to apply some punk ideas or critical thinking in your courses or do you have to stick with the guidelines of French curriculum?
Raf: Well, of course we always try to allow the kids to express themselves and have open minds, and often have to encourage them in USING their minds as well, eheh. There is not really a big problem with the guidelines, as they are not that strict. I am a substitute teacher, so I move from school to school meaning work can be very different depending on where I am. Several times a year, I work with kids who have special needs or kids with foreign backgrounds who have no knowledge of the French language; it changes a lot. It is meaningful, but very exhausting too. Working with older kids is different, somehow more challenging as you can take on more interesting subjects, but usually I work with kids from ten to sixteen.

MRR: On to a different theme; a difficult theme. There is a small town called Oradour-sur-Glane very close to Limoges, where the SS slaughtered and mass murdered several hundred civilians in 1944. Could you describe what happened there and how the village looks today? And what's your opinion on antifascism nowadays?
Raf: This small town is known because of this massacre. On the 10th of June, 1944, a division of the Waffen SS was moving up north to Normandy, stopped by in the town, rounded up most of the towns people and locked them in the church, women and children included. They set the church on fire and then the rest of the village. They killed everyone else they saw on the spot. Only a few people escaped. More than 600 people died that day. The village has been built-up again near the old one, which only has a couple of buildings left from the old days before the attack. More than 300 houses, workshops, and schools were burnt down by the Nazis that day. Nowadays it is possible to visit the site, there is a museum, and some good friends of ours work or used to work there. Being there is pretty overwhelming, to say the least.

We believe that antifascism is still needed today. The movement needs to take care of the roots of the problem, which are political, social and economical, not only a problem of racism. As long as society fails, there will be people blaming minorities. As we say, "You point at minorities – We blame the bosses!" We have to get rid of capitalism or any system based on prejudice and injustice if we want to get rid of fascism.

MRR: What are the future plans for Attentat Sonore?
Raf: For now, we are mixing five new songs and one cover that we recorded in January. There are talks of releasing a split 7" with MDC, so we are crossing our fingers and we have already searched for a couple of labels able to help us release it in a proper way. We released our new record "Syndrome de Stockholm" only a couple of months ago, so we are still working on the distribution and all. We are leaving for our tour with Sideburns Sweat at the end of the month. Next big gig will be with Rawside, Heyoka, Ratas De Porao, and many more in Britanny. We hope to tour more in 2010.

MRR: Any final comments?
Raf: I talked too much already, I guess. Don't hesitate to get in touch, say hello, trade stuff… we like this. Keep rocking society!

www.AttentatSonore.com
www.myspace.com/attentatsonore - Ruppert Murdoch still is a prick, but we are here anyways.

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Discography

2009 "Syndrome de Stockholm" 12" / CD

2007 split CD with FERTIL MISERIA (Sin Piedad Productions, Colombia)

2006 "Barricades 1905" 7"

2002 "Social Headache" 10"

1999 Split 7" with NEGATIVE IQ

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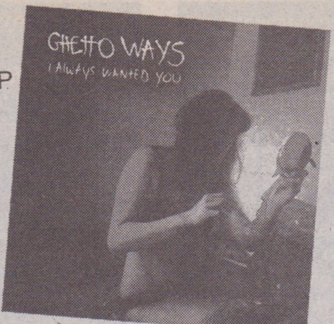

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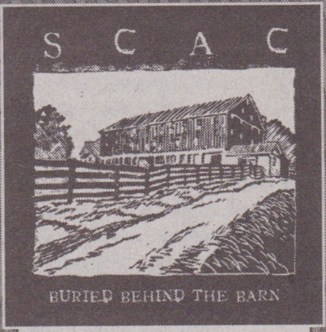
Slim Cessna's Auto Club



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Heart-shattering tracks from 2000 & 2001. Led by the vocals of Slim and Munly, these songs are original versions of later album tracks to come and compilation songs. Eight cuts of prime Auto Club at their rambunctious, old-time best

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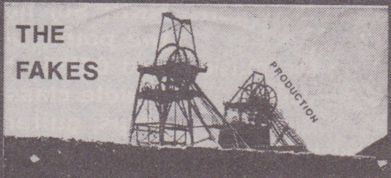
Hyped2Death

Chuck Warner's "Hyped 2 Death" (H2D) reissue label serves a thirsty community—and those in search of the rarest and best independent music from the US and UK between the late-'70s and mid-'80s will find Warner's consistently in-print CDs give much more than a track or a nugget of knowledge; H2D instead curates a vast underground cultural history in the form of DIY music. His most famous is the Messethetics *series, which specializes in DIY from Britain—with 28 volumes to date. Its art punk-ish American counterpart is* Homework, *while* Teenline *brings early power-pop rarities, and Canadian and US indie-punk is found on the original Hyped to Death volumes. Messethetics has notably dug into hyper-specific British regions like the Midlands, West Country, and South Wales. It has also veered into specialty areas profiling the Manchester Musician's Collective from 1977-82. Or the* Greatest Hiss *volume, which exhibits UK cassette culture from 1979-82, illustrating Warner's creative approach to cataloging. Each release features a phenomenal amount of photos, current contacts, interviews, histories, discographies, and most importantly, context for their rich contributions to art through sub-cultural exploration. Warner's standard description of the series sums it up neatly: "Messethetics' purpose is to document their stories...and celebrate their sounds."*

The following is a conversation with Warner about aspects of the larger sketch told by H2D—the motivation for thousands of young people in the US and UK to take up a band for anything but success. Thatcherism, unemployment, art school, experimentation, MTV, and the merits of thrift are but a few of the sparks igniting this rise in underground music still reverberating today.

Mudhutters



Interview by Jess Scott.

MRR: I just read that "Hearts in Exile" interview you did for *PopMatters.*[1] I really love the sort of mini-analogy you gave about gays in art and their relationship with the mainstream. It was a great way of summing up how sprawling DIY was—in that it freed up *so* many people.

Chuck: You're right about the freeing up. Traditionally, punk gets a lot of the credit but the real freedom wasn't so much in dressing up and indulging in extremes, but rather in being able to make music without caring what anyone else thought. I think one huge, under-rated source of that freedom was when people got the idea that independently recording and releasing their music could be cheap—and survivable. The "wow I can really do this" impulse—whether it was with DIY 45s or cassettes (and even before that with private-pressing LPs in the '70s), or now with MySpace music, or YouTube and iPod videos—seems to me, now, to be the primary "instrument" of freeing up the music-making.

MRR: Right. I think you talked about that in the same interview—OK, it was cheap, so it was now accessible to working class kids. But rich kids still dabbled and made weird bands at their "public"[2] schools.

Chuck: Let's get to the class and income part of this later... But I don't think the *absolute* cheapness was ever really the issue—just the sudden, pervasive sense of affordability and possibility. The counter-example of this came during the '80s, when MTV became ascendant. Everyone looked at their TVs and said, "Shit, there's no way I could ever do that myself." Contrast that with thousands of kids seeing the Rolling Stones tour in '65 and hearing both chords of "Off the Hook," and *knowing* "I am going to start a band this afternoon!"

MRR: It's interesting because

DIY and punk obviously spans from the '70s and into the '80s, but don't you kind of set those two periods at cultural extremes? In some ways the UK and the US are synonymous in this time, the UK was also turning more conservative. Though, the UK had more of the seedlings for artistic encouragement. I'm thinking specifically about H2D's UK series on musician's collectives. In the liner notes you talk about those cultural manifestations where they could use common practice spaces, have new band nights, etc.[3] A more socialist kind of foundation at least, compared to the conservative era in the US.

Chuck: The music of the '80s largely reflected that MTV disconnect. The main scenes were, after 1982 / the rise of MTV, garage, roots, straightedge (hardcore punk, revisited), even twee—all of which were looking backwards. Then grunge came at the end, which for all its energy was totally camera-ready—with guitar solos, etc. Things were very different in the UK both musically and politically in the '80s, I think. Thatcher had far more obvious sociological and regional (and musical) repercussions.

MRR: Right, with out and out psycho National Front, anti-immigrant movements, which likely mobilized a lot of people that might have snoozed on being political.

Chuck: Musically, too, any parallels in the UK and US in '77 punk diverged rapidly both at the mainstream level (Foreigner vs. Duran Duran) and at the home-made level (listen to the later *Homeworks* next to *Messthetics*—there aren't 5% of the songs that might appear on the other series). But the economic life in the UK got absolutely sucked out of the north (apart from the North Sea Oil): all the money and jobs went south.

MRR: Is there a reflection of that shifting in underground music? Is there a correlation between more or less economically fertile areas?

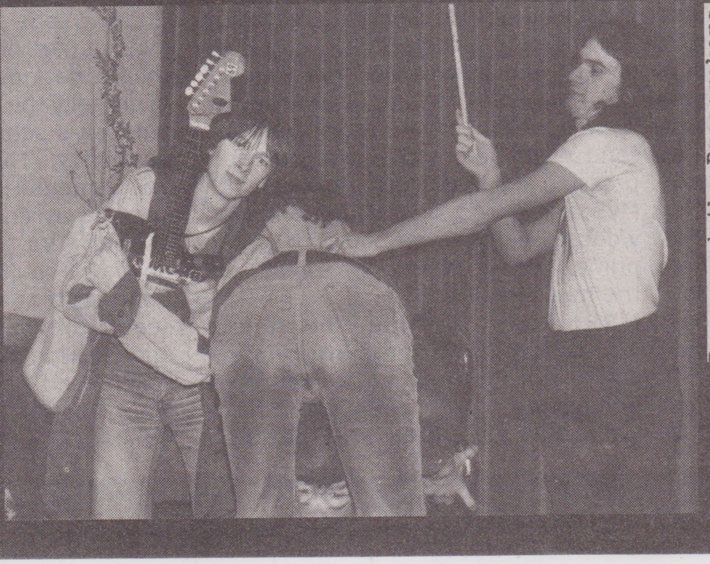
Chuck: I think there was much less effect on the music that I deal with precisely because it was perceived as cheap to produce.

MRR: But the issue of being out of work with time on your hands...How do you think the UK infrastructure of the art school put a lot of this DIY explosion into motion?

Chuck: The art school thing is only one avenue—it shows up in the lyrics, in the packaging, in the age of the influences, but it is not at all organic to indie/post-punk as a phenomenon.

MRR: And that model kind of sprawls itself all over A-R-T, period.

Chuck: I'm working on the South Coast volume right now and the weird thing is that there's almost none of that classic *Messthetics* sixth-form pratting about. Something like you hear in the Jelly Babies or "Newton's Laws" (*Messthetics* #107 features Newton's Laws of Motion recited to a home-made punk backing) is almost completely absent from the Southern counties. There *were* art schools in the South. What there weren't, however, were legions of rough-edged teenage bands releasing records and tapes. In the UK there were instruments everywhere and not having a drum-kit was no barrier to having a band. It was in the US.



Danny and the Dressmakers

MRR: Do you think people generally subscribing to that philosophy therefore "went underground" more in the '80s and that's why you see a big gulf widening between the underground and mainstream music during that time in the US? As opposed to the late '70s new wavers who tried to straddle the two worlds for a little while at least.

Chuck: Well, it was different in the US because American kids had more money than British. And city kids don't do a lot with guitars and the drum-kits—those are all in the suburbs.

But, without being too pompous on behalf of "the only music that matters"—the cheap aesthetic meant the ability to remain true to yourself musically. No fears of being misinterpreted, mis-categorized, mis-promoted, or to get back to your first comment—outed. And the whole perception of what makes a song a song, what should go on a record is totally different.

MRR: How so?

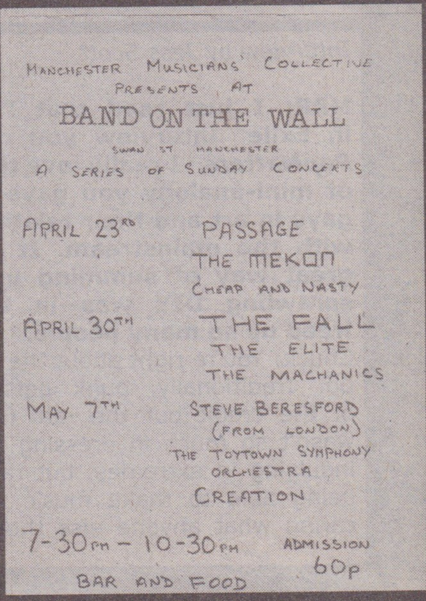
Chuck: The cassette scene in the US was almost 100% one-man electronics and overdubbing, for instance, but lots of actual (and virtual) bands did it in the UK.

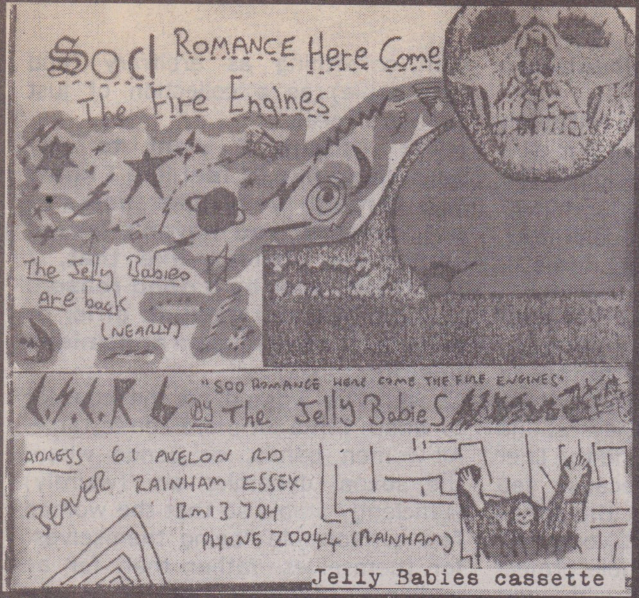
MRR: Right, very freak-alone-in-bedroom, while the UK seems more like, "Screw it, let's do a tape."

Chuck: Music is unquestionably a far bigger part of British life than anywhere here—even including places like New Orleans. Walk past any number of English pubs at 9pm and you'll still hear ordinary 50-80-somethings roaring out songs all together—never here.

MRR: So, hopefully I'm not belaboring or missing the point, but is there a correlation between class and DIY in the UK (presuming that it hangs in the middle class in the US because suburban kids have amps, guitars, etc.)?

Chuck: DIY in the UK—the longer I look at it—has nothing really to do with class. However, income did have something to do with DIY. But remember these are all kids whose parents lived through the Depression and WWII (ration cards, eggs on Sundays, etc.). So more importantly, everyone's parents shared an assumption of thrift as one of the cardinal virtues. In DIY, their children were both able to indulge in dangerous music / punk / whatever, *and* prove to their parents how virtuous/thrifty they could be.





Jelly Babies cassette

The Performing Ferret Band

MRR: There's an irony there because the illusion is that the UK is more divisible by class. But there is something deeper happening, like a cultural value of thrift, and an openness to music and art that is lacking in the US. And maybe therefore DIY was pushed to the extreme of going further underground in the US as a result. Implying that the arts and thrift are both UK tenets makes punk look really inevitable, doesn't it?

Chuck: But remember that "punk" was spectacle first in the UK. And the Bromley Contingent all had money to burn at Sex, etc. The fact that this music could be produced on the cheap, with a minimum of preparation/practice, meant punk did liberate, musically.

MRR: That's what's so powerful about punk—it had the power to transgress class, and then later regions and cultures. Speaking of regions, I see it as being really important that your series is so location-focused; dividing *Messthetics/Homework* as UK/US, and then within the series you have South London versus South Wales, etc. Have you ever thought about organizing volumes in a way different from location? For instance, you did the cassette-format volume.

Chuck: Actually, the great thing about the cassette scene (reflecting again on the number of gay musicians) is that it was transacted entirely by mail—it didn't matter where anyone was from. Thus the musical styles seemed completely democratic as well (albeit completely British).

MRR: The cassette format scene there seemed more personal. Small "pressings," etc.

Chuck: And the lyrics are small –things actually felt and done—as opposed to anthems about the important.

MRR: Right, the hand drawn, "I did it in a night over a cup of tea" aesthetic. Which two regions in the UK do you see maybe as the most different ends of the extreme exhibiting the overall British style?

Chuck: It's hard to answer that fairly—in terms of population, volume of releases, etc., it varies so much. The key is (again) feeling that it is possible and (to a lesser extent) that you are not alone in your efforts.

MRR: Yeah! I know it's a hard call. But when I listen to different *Messthetics* volumes, I try to see if I can tell where a track's from: "OK this is a northern DIY style," or whatever—trying to read the music as accents in a way.

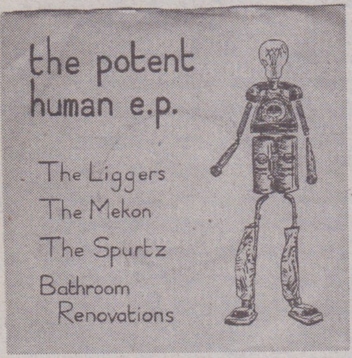
Chuck: Without the accents, there are broad trends—guitars and more polished arrangements in Scotland, experimentation in Manchester (where the scene as I've written before—seemed always in search of a "critical mass" that could get behind any particular sound). In the South there were a bunch of '60s revivalists, both garage (Milkshakes, Escalators) and beat (all the mod bands). Doom-y new wave in the Northeast, then (coming soon on *Messthetics*) you had a lot of "classic" DIY from what I'll call the "Fertile Crescent" from Reading and Oxford clockwise to Cambridge, and also (continuing on) in East Anglia and Essex.

MRR: Do you think there is a sort of proximity-to-London vibe happening there? Like, just close enough to want to react to it and destroy, or so far away that "OK, this is the way *we* do it..."

Chuck: Yeah, in terms of being able to make occasional club appearances in London if you had a band. I'm less convinced by musical ties, though. The same kids who wanted a life as musical professionals all left Newcastle for London just the same as they did from Birmingham. And DIY is about having decided (90% of the time, anyway) that of course you're not going to make it, so why not enjoy yourselves.

MRR: Intention is key, right. It's funny, I feel like trying to figure out the whys about UK DIY is like trying to "nail molasses on the wall" as my professor said the other day—there's always an exception, maybe because at the heart, it's a pretty tiny country. To shift: Do you ever feel bummed out by the competitive record buying gremlins out there? I mean, your record collection has in effect become a kind of public service, a real library in the sense of sharing and access (for a reasonable fee)—it makes you wonder what the hell (most of) the other people hoarding this stuff are doing with it.

Chuck: I started the label itself because I was "bummed out" by the mercenary tone that had completely overtaken whatever passed for interest in indie punk/post-punk/DIY at the end of the '90s. That said, I am fortunate to have a number of the "worst offenders" who let me borrow records and tapes or who will digitize them for me. I'm much more of a deejay at heart than a collector (though try explaining the houseful of



records and books!). And I'm really quite happy to have something stupefyingly rare in virtual-only format—like the Demon Preacher 45 on the front of #107: that's something I've only seen once when I borrowed it.

MRR: That's nice that you're "working within." At the core, that's what I most admire about H2D, you deliver the story above all. And the story from the record/band's inception, not what their story might mean because it is rare and you have it, etc. You really take yourself and your label out of the equation and it's effectively like a public service, a massive documentation of culture.

Chuck: Although I will admit that I enjoy making it all—what?—a bit precious? The design, the writing—not at all democratic in that way, I suppose. Going back to the deejay bit—I jam the songs right up next to each other, and present them (on each CD) not by history or desirability or really anything besides how they sound together. Folks find the liner notes vexing because you can't read about the bands in the order that you listen to them. The whole project is put together with—sort of analog hyperlinks—the interrelated stories and the intermingling sounds, the span of years. If there were a way to Wikipedia the whole ensemble and still keep my family in grocery-money I'd probably do it in a heartbeat.

MRR: I've always dug that way of organizing because it answers questions as you ask them, it's much easier than the track one-band one approach. Anyway, I was realizing that I first got in touch with you because I thought there ought to be an all-girls UK or US H2D volume. What happened to this idea? I remember getting shut down but I can't remember why! Do you think that will ever happen or something you would have fun with?

Chuck: I'm actually making some progress on *Let's Talk About Prams*[4]—unfortunately it's taken so *very* long that I've lost some of the early participants (through no fault of theirs).

It's perpetually "next", however.

MRR: *Let's Talk About Prams* is an all-girl series?

Chuck: Yeah—named for this amazing song by Vital Disorders. The singer talks about all the things she used to dream of becoming, then—bang (so to speak)—it slips into this vicious Norwich horn-punk thing as she spits out "Let's talk about prams—and washing machines / Let's talk about the end—of childhood dreams!" Among my past careers I have some fairly deep background in feminist liberation theology (er...) and the wider movements of the '70s with the result that I am excruciatingly uncomfortable with something as arbitrary (and exploitable) as a collection of just women's vocals.

MRR: Right. I want to say something like "I feel like I know you through your liner notes"—but, because you haven't issued something obvious like that, I felt there must be a good reason. It isn't like you exclude girls, or miss their contribution and unique position in DIY.

Chuck: I've worked on the concept to where I'm a lot more comfortable. All-women bands, or bands where the sexual dynamics are (weirdly) sufficiently stable so that the women feel comfortable "being themselves" for themselves—rather than for an audience of either punters in the clubs or reviewers, or even just "for" the boys in the band. Expect to see several married couples and ex-lovers represented as well...and plenty of philosophical/existential agonizing.

MRR: It seems like you'd have to get really specific, just like you do in a "South Wales" kind of way.

Chuck: At least I am no longer keeping women's bands off of the CDs just because I'm holding off until *Prams* is ready.

MRR: Will you call it *Messthetics* or is *Prams* going to be a whole new series?

Chuck: It'll be titled *Let's Talk About Prams* but it will have a *Messthetics* 100-series number.

MRR: I can't wait!

Check out Chuck's whole series at Hyped 2 Death's site: www.hyped2death.com

(Endnotes)

1. PopMatters "Hearts In Exile" Interview: www.popmatters.com/pm/feature/66350-hearts-in-exile-an-interview-with-h2d-founder-chuck-warner-1/P1/

2. In the British school system, the term "public school" actually refers to private schools, confusingly.

3. From H2D *Messethetics* series "Punk and DIY in London III."

4. A "pram" is British for a stroller.

BOOKS

Punker Than You
Dave McIntyre
412 pages • $14.50
Dave McIntyre
206-717 Eglinton Avenue West
Toronto, Ontario M5N 1C9
Canada

It's great to read more and more novels by punks that are well written and engaging. This one by Canadian writer and former punk band member Dave McIntyre is the latest in a string of excellent fictionalized memoirs of growing up punk (another example is Charles Romalotti's Salad Days).

The book's premise is that the narrator, Paul "Poker" Cartwright, becomes ticked off by a short article in a Toronto alternative weekly paper about a former band-mate of his, Matt "Spike Liberty" Miller, and Miller's subsequent move from punk to techno. He starts to write a letter to the author, a no-nothing music critic, when the article is printed in December 1994, but life, computer problems, apathy, and much more interfere with his plans and the letter becomes this 412 page book, finally finished in March 2003 and never sent to the critic who inspired it.

Its structure allows the narrator to be as caustic and informal as he needs to be to keep the story progressing. Initially, Poker is writing a snappy, smart-assed letter only to the critic. 400 pages of this would get annoying no matter who's writing it, so eventually McIntyre allows his narrator to switch moods and go off on many tangents. This leads, eventually, to in-depth ruminations about music, growing up, love, meeting old friends years later, and much more that will be familiar to anyone who's been involved with underground music or art for more than a couple of years. How do you balance "real life" with your music and/or art?

Don't misunderstand. This is not a series of dry letters to MRR about "what is punk" or screeds about "ethics and art." The points he makes are usually couched among insane stories of violence, music, narcotics, alcohol, puberty, true love, puppy love, and survival struggles in the big city (in this case, Toronto).

Without divulging any spoilers, the story basically follows Poker Cartwright from his small town's discovery of punk in 1987 through the town's glory days of punk rockdom and the various permutations of punk (both musically and socially) that he and his friends discovered/imitated. The story goes on to follow Poker for the next sixteen years as he and his friends and enemies go in and out of the music scene around Toronto. Many real bands (DOA, Dayglo Abortions, Minor Threat, Black Flag, Slow) are mentioned, as are a slew of fake bands. There's even a fake MRR review of Poker Carwright's band! It's clear that a punk, or someone who was at one time deeply involved with punk, wrote this book. Many of the narrator's observations will ring true to MRR readers. Here's an excerpt from Poker's time at a punk loft in 1995. Sound familiar?

"People who self-identify as 'punk'—those who claim to be 'oppressed' by society—are really not oppressed enough. It's too damn easy for kids to strap on a spiked armband and some Doc Martens and clomp down the main drag expressing their opposition to the Man... For some of these kids, punk rock has become a phase: one summer you're blasting Bad Religion CDs and scribbling band logos on your sneakers in ballpoint pen, the next year you're all cleaned up and running on the track team. Is there something wrong with people like me, who can't seem to get this whole rebellion thing out of our systems even in our mid-twenties? Big business corporate greedheads still suck, developers still rape the rainforest and ruin farmland with their ugly duplicate houses, cops in LA and other big cities still "aim for the black" during rifle practice. There is still so much to be angry about these days, and the only reasonable reaction is revolt, or a loud guitar and a scream at the absolute least.

Even so, the people I deal with daily here make me furious. Occasionally they're inspired enough to articulate a political position, but then you ask them when they last participated in a demonstration or wrote a letter to the editor and they look back at you like a dog watching television... I swear, one more lecture about how voting is just a covert scheme the government uses to collect information on its citizens, and I'm joining the hippie commune in the warehouse across the street. Maybe someone there knows how to cook a real dinner."

McIntyre slips in some sweet imagery throughout the book. No doubt his time writing song lyrics helped him distill things down to an elegant minimum. This section comes from Poker and Matt's bands' US tour:

"Something about being here in the US just gives me the creeps for some reason. Like listening to a tape player with the Dolby off. Everything sounds brighter, but you also hear the hissing underneath."

Poker Cartwright does have some odd views about female punks, and I'm not sure if the author shares these views or if they're inserted into the story for purposes of juxtaposition with his straight girlfriend. In early sections of Punker Than You he is madly in lust with multiple punk girls, while in later sections he equates punk females as having "skin scarred with tattoos." These punk women are, by drinking and looking "offensive," giving in to "failure" and degradation. To be fair, he only mentions "drunk punks" in these passages, but unlike pretty much every other part of the book he doesn't differentiate between the particular women he's talking about and all of the other punk women that exist both in his literary world and in the real world. It was a jarring enough section that I took note of it and upon re-reading it I'm still puzzled about its inclusion.

That short note aside, Punker Than You is an enjoyable, well-written faux memoir of growing up punk and staying punk on one's own terms. It vividly describes the collision course between youthful punk idealism and the heavy-handed arrival of "real life." Through the narrator's memories of shows, fights, drugs, sex, poverty, and music, the book describes different ways that punks handle this often painful and always confusing situation. Dave McIntyre has a gift for fast-paced, detail-laden, conversational writing, and the fact that this 400+ page book did not feel like it was that long is a testament to his skill.

—Jesse Luscious

Paper Politics
Josh MacPhee ed.
$24.95 • 144 pages
PM Press
www.pmpress.org

Carrying on the work of artists creating art for more than art's sake, instead using social justice and global equity-themed art as a vehicle to engage community in political conversation, Paper Politics started out as an exhibition first hung in Chicago in 2004 in the offices of In These Times magazine. This book showcases what became a travelling exhibit (hosted in 11 different cities from 2004-2009) of politically and socially engaged print art.

Though traditional printmaking techniques were used for all the original work, what's been created and collected here is cutting-edge contemporary. Though the art was created by artist hands and the exhibitions organized and shows hung by collective labors of love with the purpose of building community, mass-production printing was indeed used to create the book.

While the exhibit boasts a cumulative crowd of thousands, the exhibit in book form becomes more portable, practical and accessible. This obviously creates a contradictory question. Traditionally created printmaking stands out from the digital age pack of billboards and bus ads, but can only be printed in small batches by hand. Josh MacPhee asks in his introduction, "If the goal of printmaking is communicating ideas, and we want those ideas to reach as many people as possible, does it really make sense to be printing seventy handmade posters in the age of mass production?"

Following MacPhee's introduction are two essays and four sections or reproduced prints. The first is Repression—imprisonment, eviction, torture, surveillance, media control, privatization, apartheid, suppression. Repression is followed by Aggression—war, bombing, colonization, invasion, murder, extinction, genocide, rape. Third up is Resistance—liberation, solidarity, organizing, occupation, direct action, uprising, disobedience, struggle. And last but not least, Existence—identity, awareness, movement, communication, creation, transportation, perseverance, joy. Each section showcases about 40 reprints; in total, included are nearly 200 artists and artist

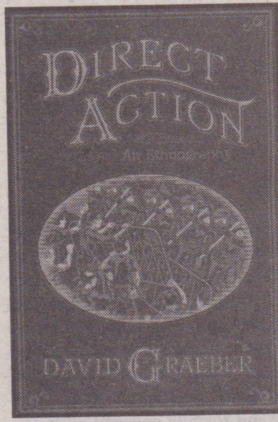
collectives from over a dozen countries and over seventy-five cities, suburbs and small towns. The art here is alive with color, style, unity and diversity - from stencil art spray painted on old dumpstered blueprints to precise and fine art intaglios on Arches paper. Each section is interspersed with artist commentary explaining why they print by hand, what they hope to gain and to whom they hope to speak.

The first essay is "Political Art and Printmaking: A Brief and Partial History" by Deborah Caplow. Caplow credits the beginnings of political printmaking to Francisco Goya in the beginning of the nineteenth century and reminds us that political art has earned many an artist hefty jail terms for having had the audacity to oppose injustice, war and corruption. Caplow also explains why the printmaking medium, say instead of painting or sculpture, lends itself supremely to messages of political opposition; it's reproducible, has low cost and holds great potential for graphic expressiveness. The essay suggests that graphic political art has never been more popular as the evidence can be found in the form of posters, flyers and stencils on the walls, streets, newspapers and magazines all over the world.

The second essay, "All the Instruments Agree," by Eric Triantafillou, is an extremely thoughtful and well-written piece on the intersection of art and politics. Starting with vivid description and sharply deconstructed political analysis of the wheat paste wall on Valencia Street in San Francisco, the essay suggests that ultimately, single-issue political images have the effect of reducing the larger political context in which the image is based down to an oversimplified "us" vs. "them" or "evil" vs. "good" message. They confound the broader message that needs to be communicated in order for the art as political tool to be successful. Triantafillou ends with a call to all fellow left printmakers to unify their politics into a set of shared goals "based on an intransigent desire for total social freedom."

Paper Politics is for those who recognize that both art and politics are about communication and also about community. As much as it is a collection of individual artists' prints, the project has proven itself to be a successful exercise in large scale organization. Josh MacPhee writes about the project's intent, "...a community of printmakers and a more specific audience for our work than the existing 'anyone that happens to see it on the street'." Proof of that intents success is that a couple dozen of the artists involved with the exhibits went on to become members of the Justseeds Artists' Cooperative, an artist-owned and run collective and online gallery. Over the years of the traveling exhibit, artists and audiences have met face to face and wound up building more long-term relationships than a passing glimpse of a wheat pasted poster on the street could ever provide.

—Jessica Mills



Direct Action: An Ethnography
David Graeber
600 pages • $25.95
AK Press
www.akpress.com

Every minute detail of anarchist and activist culture has finally been captured in David Graeber's Direct Action: An Ethnography. Weighing in at just over 500 pages, Graeber attempts to do the impossible—go through this political group with a fine-toothed comb.

Graeber's book begins with a first-hand account of the process and protests of the summit of the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) in Quebec City, Canada in April of 2001. Graeber worked closely with NYC's Direct Action Network and Ya Basta! Collective and detailed the meetings and events that helped to organize part of these protests. While this accounts for the ethnography in practice, the next sections constitute the theory behind these cultures. Graeber describes the ethos of direct action, anarchism, provides a demographic make-up of people involved in the scene, discusses problems and inaccuracies within the culture, and the process that meetings and action take.

The length of the book is testament to the fact that Graeber is very thorough on a culture that is multi-faceted. However, readers who are completely unaware of this culture might have benefited if Graeber gave a better activist description as a form of context placement before diving into the nitty gritty of everyday activist life. As well, the first 200 pages are dedicated to diary accounts of meetings and action, and Graeber does too good of a job of conveying these meetings to the point where it's difficult to get through. It's important to include some dialogue and choreography of meetings to get an impression of the overall functioning of these groups, but much of this could have been summarized as to enhance the book's overall fluency.

Chapter six of the book, "Some Notes on Activist Culture," is most interesting to a person like myself, who had a long history with activism before falling out over obvious hypocrisies. In this chapter, Graeber discusses how white privilege and class backgrounds affect the message of the culture. This is perhaps where the true worth of the book shines, because it is necessary to identify the problems within activism and anarchism to rectify them. As much as these cultures like to criticize the methods of popular culture, much of that analysis is lost when focused on itself. However, the one glaring misstep is the complete absence of the discussion of sexism, which was inevitably the cause of countless of my girlfriend's departures from activism as well as my own. In fact, Graeber uses a notorious sexual assaulter as a small portrait of a "hardcore" NYC anarchist within this chapter, calling him "heroic." It's the lack of any in-depth interest into the sexist, patriarchal underpinnings of this culture that makes me cringe at the misreporting that is evident here.

Regardless of its faults, this book is an interesting read as it captures the essence of activists and anarchists quite well. It's written in an approachable style so that those other than cultural anthropologists can have access to it. Although it is intended so that anyone might learn from it, even current activists and anarchists could greatly benefit by picking up a copy.

—Krista Ciminera

Vegan Freak: Being Vegan in a Non-Vegan World, version 2.0
Bob and Jenna Torres
222 pages • $14.95
PM Press
www.pmpress.org

Vegans have a lot of baggage. It can't be easy to constantly face the general expectation that the average person will find them annoying. While Vegan Freak visits this seemingly unnecessary aspect of the vegan identity, repeatedly warning vegans not to be "preachy," people who consider themselves mostly vegan, vegetarian, or omnivorous will probably be put off by the fundamentalist theses that make up the core of the book.

At base, Bob and Jenna Torres make the argument that people should be ethical vegans. By ethical vegans, a term which they interchange with "vegan" without adjectives throughout the book, they mean people who stop consuming animal products for the vague reason that animals should not be made to suffer for human use. I say vague, because the reasoning is never made formal in some sort of Peter Singer style maxim, but instead is laid out through analogies. The first half of the book makes assertions about how animals should not be consumed by describing and comparing atrocities. The descriptions work to stir moral questioning, but the comparisons are unnecessary and offensive. It does not help their argument to compare the trauma of sexual assault to harming animals.

The main function of Vegan Freak is to argue that there is only one right reason to go vegan, and it is the ethical one. Statements like "stop applying fuzzy and illogical moral lenses" appear frequently in the book. The authors make arguments against vegans who are vegan for health or environmental reasons and ethical vegetarians for not going far enough. Why people think it is not a moral wrong to harm animals receives little attention beyond limited references to acculturation.

This question of "why" is more pressing for the cause of animal well-being, especially if we consider the world beyond non-human animals, a perspective which the book never explores. The idea of changing the world through consumption habits is appealing to people of monetary privilege, mostly because it means not buying something to which they have the means of access. While abstaining from a social relationship can be an ethical position, it is difficult to maintain that position without looking at the other relationships that perpetuate the contributing systems that allow these kinds of consumption and distance from food production. In example, dismissing the environmental reasons for going vegan seems tricky if your book is going to recommend soy protein as an alternative. An ethical vegan that lived by this book would put money into soy markets that make up the new mono-crop system in South America, and the oil based food transportation markets that are built into economically rationalizing foreign wars.

The second half of the book is about how to coax other people into being vegan without being too annoying instead of relying on the ethical reasoning the book proposes as the only right way to be vegan. It is filled with caricatures of non-vegans who will give you a hard time and how to deal with them, and some health advice on being vegan. If you can't understand why your partner is not vegan and it bothers you a great deal, you are probably a really annoying person and you should think about why your primary ethical identity is food based.

While there is some thought provoking information and comedic tales of interactions with non-vegans in Vegan Freak, it is at root overly simplistic. From the perspective of someone who consumes a mostly vegan diet, it did little to change the way I think about the world. The book did, however, make me wonder about the problems of basing an ethical identity on judgment and how important food is to our relationships with other people.

—Zane Grant

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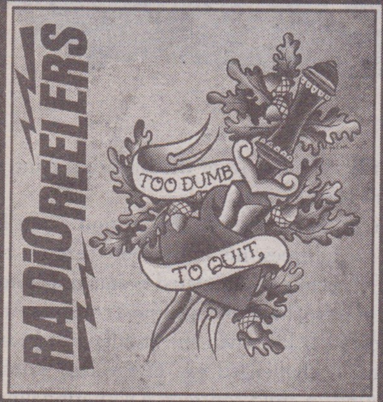

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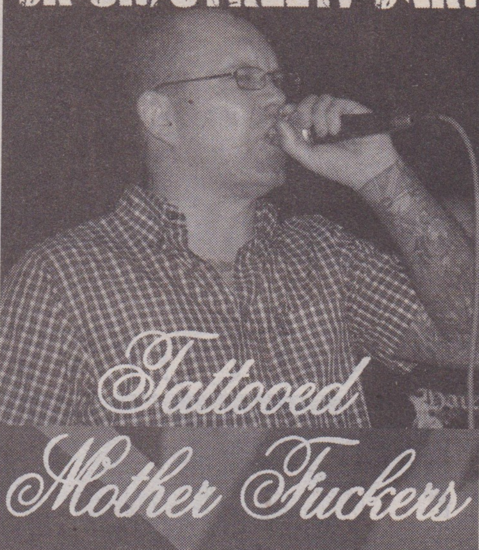

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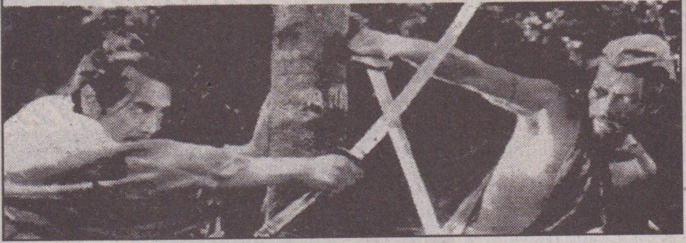

PICKING WINNERS

Much has been written on the arcane art of Oscar handicapping. Alas, by the time this issue goes to press, the winner of the Academy Awards' best foreign film Oscar will have been awarded, making a prediction something of an anti-climax. What's less known to many is that this category boasts an especially robust, progressive crop of entries. A good part of the time, the Academy selections include a variety of films that have earned wide acclaim in international film festivals; even the more esoteric films are worthy, but would otherwise have fallen into obscurity.

Among these films, however, several may not have been available for previewing—or even promised a commercial release. In nearly all cases, they've been shown in a few regional festivals, if that. The good news, however, is that the top picks can usually be depended upon for a combination of top-flight filmmaking skill and (if you're into it) weighty subject matter.

Not to brag, but I'm fairly certain who the winner will be, if more than a few years of successful handicapping is any indication. Of course, making a statement like this is bound to get you in trouble down the line, but I'm willing to accept the risks.

To the relief of all, the Motion Picture Academy seems to have weaned itself from its weakness for earnest coming-of-age films; bigger-budget blockbusters seem to have been expunged from consideration, opting instead for serious (and frankly, often grave) dramatic features—and if they touch on the issue of the Holocaust, however gingerly, their chances for success increase markedly.

By that standard, one entry in particular comes to the fore. Director Michael Haneke emerges as a favorite to nab the best foreign film Oscar, thanks to a bounty of international awards—and subject matter likely to appeal to Academy voters. But unlike features that would more directly address the excesses of the Third Reich, Haneke's film focuses on social problems that predate Germany's fateful joust with history by over thirty years.

Filmed in evocative black and white, the events in **The White Ribbon** transpire in a modest German village that's a clear metaphor for community life at the time. Theirs is a pastoral setting that, at least on the surface, seems the very image of peace and subdued order. A school teacher (Ernst Jacobi) narrates the story, but appears here in the form of an idealistic young teacher (played by Christian Friedel). His eyes take in a curious set of events which, divorced from the historical context, might not otherwise seem terribly suspicious.

The town's doctor (Rainer Bock) tumbles to the ground when his horse triggers a trip wire set in the trees; his injuries are serious, but not mortal. But then, a series of seemingly unrelated events transpire – which might mean little by themselves, but build to almost conspiratorial levels. A farm laborer's wife loses her life when she accidentally breaks a barn door. The young, mentally challenged son of a village elder is found violently beaten and bound. A child contracts a withering illness that portends an uncertain fate they all somehow sense.

Under normal conditions, the villagers would probably take these and other misfortunes in stride. But the claustrophobic environment, poisoned by uncertainty and suspicion, mirrors a world that threatens to fall prey to its own weaknesses.

Director Haneke drafted the screenplay with award-winning screenwriter and film veteran Jean-Claude Carriere (whose work with **Max Mon Amour** rates high in my all-time favorites), and the combination lends a subtlety and formality to the story. The characters aren't referred to by their names; rather, we meet the cast through their roles (the school teacher, farmer, baron, pastor). The implication is that the town's social structure has begun to cast them as objects, not individuals—the kind of mind-set that could later be exploited for purposes of war.

Of course, there have been any number of towns in Europe and elsewhere that, faced with similar challenges, were able to resist the concept of formal conflict. And almost certainly, there were (and are) countries with fewer material advantages than the people here. If anything, it probably makes more sense to view this pre-war German environment to be vulnerable to the temptations and moral confusion depicted here. **The White Ribbon** is designed to give a psychological portrait of a people whose future exists in potential.

The film is for the most part humorless, gray, and uncompromising. The pastor (Burghart Klaussner) is the worst offender of all. He psychologically brands his children by forcing them to wear a white ribbon emblematic of childlike purity; privately, he resorts to other strategies to enforce his brand of moral cleanliness. In director Haneke's vision, this world of arbitrary rules and codes deprive the children of any sensible moral compass.

Less convincing as a historical corrective, **The White Ribbon** works best as a parable of sorts. At its best, the film attempts to show the German state of mind—a mixture of simplicity and ambition—by showing how cultural values betray a state of mind. Full of vivid incidents, and underscored by earnestness, it tries its hardest to reveal the future through seemingly random moments of the distant past. If it wins, it would join **The Lives Of Others** as another German film attempting to make sense of its more recent history. In so far as the year's Oscar race is concerned, **The White Ribbon** has to be regarded as a front-runner.

Ajami has a similar sense of gravity, albeit in the guise of a crime thriller of sorts—or at least one that's willing to play with the genre. The film weaves five plot strands together, in the same way that the somewhat superior Mexican feature **Amores Perros** did some years back; but **Ajami** uses its narrative structure more honestly, attempting

to show a network of religious and family alliances in a region where Muslim and Israeli must work and communicate with each other. It's not so much that anyone wants to get along; it's that they have to.

Many of the characters here have multiple alliances, regardless of their racial backgrounds. To wit, youthful Omar (Shahir Kabaha) has business with a Bedouin crime clan, enjoys refuge thanks to his pretty girlfriend, and tries to avoid the long arm of the law in the process. In each case, ambition and love are kept in place by more powerful societal pressures; the winners are few and far between.

Ajami has a less than distinguished visual style, and lacks the technical prowess needed to make a film in the **Amores Perros** style, or to seamlessly bind together the storylines. Then again, you can't deny its energy, nor its willingness to be evenhanded in its treatment of the theme. Part of the credit is due to the filmmakers behind the project, Scandar Copti and Yaron Shani—Arab and Jewish, respectively—who constructed a genre picture around the unique social realities of the characters. A number of the actors are non-professional, giving the drama almost a vérité feel at times. And while the story is hardly optimistic, the fact that filmmakers from different backgrounds can unite under a single viewpoint is exceptionally hopeful. True, the region is not noted for its brilliant filmmaking, but if an audience is patient with the material and willing to do some research into the subject matter, the narrative is really quite rewarding. If anything, it may inspire audiences to reevaluate prejudices based on religion or social background. That's probably what the filmmakers hoped to achieve, and they show real energy at presenting their diverse points of view.

Films from Spain have consistently been the focus of special attention, thanks to expert production and often-spirited acting. While I did not get a chance to preview it, **The Secret in their Eyes** looks to be a very well orchestrated feature. Weighted by "heavy" themes like old age and Alzheimer's, it's consistent with the serious complexion of the other nominees. Unfortunately, the possibility of a commercial release seems remote at this point in time. Aside from which, the frank subject matter may be a turn-off for some older Academy members.

The lesson for film fans, however, is to make a special effort to see any year's nominated entries. The Academy's method of choosing films is, frankly, rather flawed—but there's always a bounty of quality material to seek out and enjoy

BRING ME THE HEAD OF GENE SISKEL

CAROLYN KEDDY

It is hard to imagine who the documentary **Electric Purgatory: The Fate Of The Black Rocker** is really aiming to enlighten. If it is an obsessive music fan, they don't get deep enough into it. If it is an average person who doesn't really care about music, the filmmakers would never get them watch this. It is a common problem with music documentaries, balancing that elusive line between music fans and casual viewers without alienating either. There is an important point to get across in **Electric Purgatory: The Fate Of The Black Rocker**. There is a lack of respect and audience for a black man or woman playing rock'n'roll. I am willing to listen and to explore why this is, but the film never really goes beyond the complaints.

I know rock'n'roll developed from the blues. I am willing to guess that anyone who knows something about music history is aware of it; it is well documented. **Electric Purgatory: The Fate Of The Black Rocker** wisely chooses to briefly mention that history. The film concentrates on the '80s and '90s bands that have talent and small-time success, yet failed to break out. Why? **Electric Purgatory: The Fate Of The Black Rocker** argues that it's because African Americans aren't seen as rockers by music fans or by record labels.

The band held up as the essential example in **Electric Purgatory: The Fate Of The Black Rocker** is Fishbone. I am actually surprised that they weren't successful, but then one of the band's members recalls meeting with the major label executives before releasing their first album and the executives suggest changes to be made to the songs. The band makes the changes and the album bombs. The label gives up on the band instantly. Unfortunately, this seems to be a common story. Most of the bands have similar experiences. A few people mention that the bands need to start their own labels and do their own promotion. Makes sense to me.

It all seems to come down to the major labels not doing their job promoting these bands. To a punk this is old hat. When have the major labels ever done anything right? If a band becomes big, it usually seems like an accident. Even then, who knows how long that success will last? The music buying audience is a fickle group too. So I am in agreement, but what is to be done? (www.electricpurgatory.com)

No one smiles in **Loren Cass**. There doesn't seem to be much to smile about. The film tells the story (or lack of story) of a group of young people in Florida as their lives progress over a couple of days. They don't ever seem to do anything. In the beginning, a car picks up a shaven-headed male and they drive to school. While at the same time, a girl leaves a boy in her bed and walks out of her parents' house. She gets into a car and goes to school too. Neither interacts with nor acknowledges the other. Then they leave school.

Characters in **Loren Cass** walk around in a daze. They fight, get drunk, and have sex, whatever. Nothing seems to change their mood. It is a bleak outlook on life, one that is emphasized by the odd use of voice over narration. The narration doesn't explain what you see on screen, just random thoughts that may or may not belong to the characters. It enhances the dark mood. The one semblance of optimism is the beginning of a potential love story between waitress Nicole and car mechanic Cale. The use of a city bus as a symbol for a budding romance is a twisted take on love, one that appropriately fits in with the rest of this dreariness.

Loren Cass is by first time filmmaker Chris Fuller. He does an amazing job, technically, on what I am sure was a small budget. The film looks very professional. The mostly unknown actors really get into their characters. They are so believable that you just have to hope they are just acting. I wouldn't want anyone to be this morose and depressed. (www.lorencass.com)

The Smell is a music venue in Los Angeles. **Live At The Smell** is a DVD document of performances at the Smell. The DVD starts off with a brief introduction to the club. The camera moves through the front door, down the hall, past the person collecting money, into the main room and right up on stage. It is quick, but you can somewhat get the idea of what it might be like walking into the place.

The remainder of **Live At The Smell** is one song each from the No Age, HEALTH, Gowns, The Mae Shi, Captain Ahab, High Places, Abe Vigoda, Foot Village, Ponytail and BARR. The bands are diverse, ranging from the drum circle of Foot Village to the computer programmed dance music of Captain Ahab to the rock of No Age. If this is an accurate cross section of bands, it appears to be the type of place where experimentation is encouraged and musical ability is not necessary. (www.coldhandsvideo.com)

I am always looking for films to review. If you made one, send a copy to Carolyn Keddy, PO Box 460402, San Francisco, CA 94146-0402. If your film is playing in the San Francisco Bay Area, let me know at carolyn@maximumrocknroll.com. I will go see it. www.carolynkeddy.com

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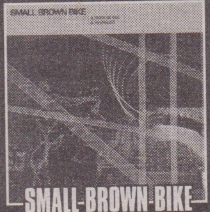
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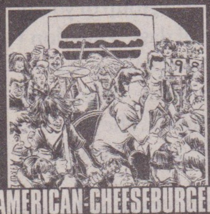
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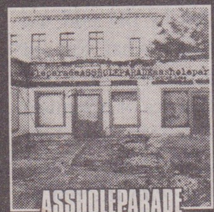
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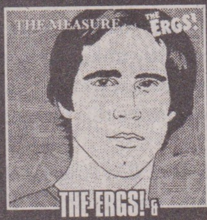
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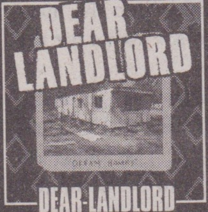
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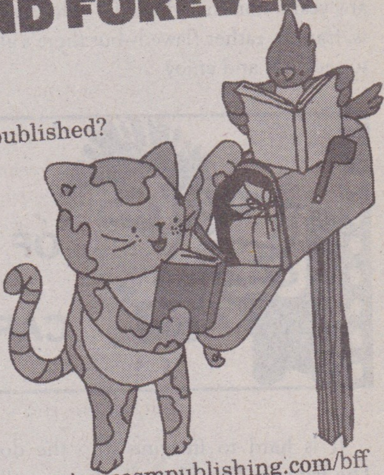

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AA – "Essential Entertainment" EP
The first song I listened to on this is so perfect. It's called "The Shot" and it's like "Do the Du" but without any of A CERTAIN RATIO's pop-star dreams. Just a total liberation anthem of post-punk dance, a collision between, say, LIQUID LIQUID and um, the FIRE ENGINES?? If you can imagine. For some reason I thought they were Danish, but they are actually from Belgium—sorry Belgians! I think this was their only record, which apparently got to NYC courtesy of Y-PANTS and the BUSH TETRAS—a pretty amazing method of punk post, if you ask me. The rest of the music is nervous and contained, quite distinct from the aforementioned song, making this a clear classic of the era. The fact that they broke up shortly after forming because it was clear that they were becoming too "together" and "professional" as a band makes the music even more endearing. There are only 500 of these, and the original goes for over $500, so pick it up if you see it! (LG)
(Soft Spot Music)

ACES & EIGHTS – "A Different Animal" CD
Imagine, if you will, MOTÖRHEAD and the current version of the BUSINESS playing covers of the KIDS song "This Is Rock'n'Roll," and you'd be right in the ballpark of this Boise band's sound. Even some AC/DC in a coupla songs. A few parts Oi/street-punk, a few parts bar rock. At times—and this is kinda out of nowhere—the vocals often remind me of Jared from KARP/BIG BUSINESS. Now, I know that sounds weird but those parts are my fave ones on this disc. Not too shabby for the style. (JU)
(Downtown Academy)

THE ACTION – "Smashing, White Hot" LP
Rave-Up Records in the past has brought us some ho-hum retrospectives as well as some mandatory ones; this LP falls firmly in the second camp. The ACTION is one of my favorite late-'70s punk bands, looking like a bunch of fruitcakes yet kicking out some STOOGES-meet-VILETONES jams. It's got a sweet glam edge, but the vocals are totally slurred. Their lone 12" is one of my collector nerd holy grails. This LP compiles that 12" and as the title suggests, shit is white hot. Listen to "Do the Strangle"...so punk!!! The unreleased gear is more glam, less punk; the live stuff is muddy and throwaway. But the first four tracks are more than worth it. Wouldda been nicer to have has the 12" reished instead. (TB)
(Rave-Up)

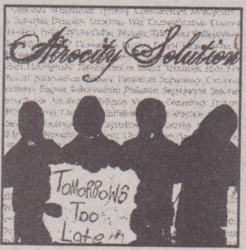
AGUIRRE – "Calvaire" LP
It seems like sludge is becoming really popular with hardcore/punk kids again—I suppose we have THOU to thank for that. Whatever it is, EYEHATEGOD- and GRIEF-worship is never a bad thing in my book. While France's AGUIRRE may not live up to their forefathers, they still manage to produce some damn fine hardcore-influenced doom metal. This LP contains four epic songs that rely heavily on down-tuned guitars and rumbling bass with minimal yet powerful drums and screamed/shouted vocals that lean towards the crustier side of things. Definitely recommended. (XV)
(Blind Date / Alerta Antifascista / Exutoire)

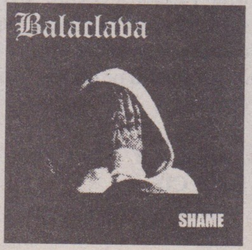
AIDS WOLF / SATANIZED – split EP
OK, OK, OK, I actually kind of dig this, even though I've always seen AIDS WOLF as art-shock throwaways, but this is pretty heavy. Screamy YOKO ONO vocals, lots of chaos and screech. As per usual, all these songs could be like a minute shorter—the jam-outs on the end are *waaaayyyy* to long. SATANIZED sounds basically the same except replace YOKO with a boring BIRTHDAY PARTY-era NICK CAVE. Both sides have plodding doom and then chaotic, blown-out, math-y free disco jazz moments. Kind of liked it better at the wrong speed. (MM)
(Badmaster)

AK47 – "AK47" CD
You want old-school hardcore complete with agitprop disquisition done right? You got it! 24 songs in 22 minutes; anti-Gitmo and anti-SKREWDRIVER ("Fuck Racism Fuck Skrewdriver and Fuck You Too") lyrics, delivered at breakneck pace (see "24 songs in 22 minutes"). As I said, done right. (DD)
($7 ppd: Reason)

AMARGO / DESANGRADOS – split EP
Two completely raw punk bands that sing in Spanish but are from the East Coast of the US. There is a heavy Peruvian slant here in theme as well as in sound. The lyric sheet states that most of the songs deal with the Peruvian civil war from the 1980s to the 1990s. Sonically raw-as-fuck punk with gruff vocals—this is pretty amazing shit. If you snooze you will miss out on it: only 500 made, so act fast. You will not be disappointed. Great split! (MS)
(Contraorden / Sin Temores)

AMBER ALERTS – "Antibodies" EP
Opening with a slow, sluggish and electro-fied song that's the audio equivalent of trying to make it through the day on a belly full of codeine, or maybe what it'd sound like listening to the OH SEES while digesting a mouthful of downers. The flipside starts with some dude saying, "Ha ha, nigger! Yeah nigger!" Wow. Two records I get this month with "nigger" on them. Ironic? Idiotic. The riff from "Somewhere Under a Shit Cloud"





sounds a lot like LIKET LEVER's "Levande Begravd." Probably a coincidence. The riff rules and thus the B-side of this ("nigger" comment aside) wins out. (IS)
(Sweet Rot)

ANTIMOB / BURIAL – split EP
Greece's ANTIMOB gives us two tracks of savage thrash attack. Until this release, I was only familiar with heavy, dark and plodding Greek bands, but these folks are a fine fit with BURIAL. They are a bit heavy, but also totally raging, flying fast, with shouted vocals, some guitar leads, and catchy songs. Hell yes! The lyrics are in Greek, with explanations in English. BURIAL has been putting out rad, fast hardcore records for a few years now. This track isn't their best material, but it's still good enough. The guitars are going crazy and the sound is just on the edge of blown out. Each stick on the snare is like a flog on your bare ass. This particular song isn't quite as catchy or memorable as some other shit they've written, but that's to be expected when they've released so much great material. According to the ANTIMOB site, this EP is already almost gone. (JM)
(Hardware)

APPALACHIAN TERROR UNIT – "It's Far from Fucking Over: Discography Pt. 1" CD
This disc compiles the West Virginia unit's two EPs on Profane Existence Records. They play a rather metallic, crusty style, which sounds great on the first EP, *Armageddon Won't Be Brought by God*, but the sound is compressed for their second, longer EP, *Greenwashing*. If you've heard that first one, you've heard their best material. The band is explicitly radical and environmentally minded. They use the inaudible-spoken-word part à la CONFLICT in classic anarcho fashion, though their diatribes are intelligible. They're not afraid to break the three-minute mark in their songs, which is fine if you're drunk at the show, but over a whole CD, at home, sober, it's a little much for me. The packaging for this release spreads their bile [message] effectively. My advice is to try the *Armageddon Won't Be Brought by God* 7" first. (JM)
(Profane Existence)

THE ART MUSEUMS – "Rough Frame" CD
Finally, a CD that won't go straight to the freebee bin. First off this ain't punk—it's barely even rock'n'roll—but that don't necessarily make it a bad record. Sometimes it even means the opposite, and this, thank the gods, is one of those exceptions. A delightful amount of reverb and some digital noodlings done with a health love of the TELEVSION PERSONALITIES and some of that indie cheek of the HIDDEN CAMERAS. A nice '60s psych folk feel, not unlike PEARLS BEFORE SWINE and PISCES. The harmonies are beautiful, almost up there with FLEET FOXES, and that MARY CHAIN-sparked distortion: pure sugar to the ears. If this don't make my end of year top ten, it means I have dropped dead or become a nun. (SD)
(Woodsist)

ATROCITY SOLUTION – "Tomorrow's Too Late" CD
This rather excellent seven-tracker bears more than a passing resemblance to the second STAR FUCKING HIPSTERS full-length. ATROCITY SOLUTION manages to mix up melodic (yet raspily warped) vocals and pop tunes with a dash of ska, metallic riffs and driving melodic hardcore tuneage...often all in the same song! It's actually incredibly impressive. Lyrics are not half bad, either. 'Tis a good month for music! (RK)
(Tent City)

BABYTEARS – CD
I know that this band is totally unaware of how damn good they are. I will do my very best. This record plows like a juggernaut, crook full of pounding distortion but never once loosing any of its sensibility for a killer hook, riff and those special catchy moments that make a record stick instead of shit. Imagine, if you will, KILLING JOKE put through the grinder, the BIRTHDAY PARTY cranked up, the FALL on steroids and the MEMBRANES without the filler—a big brother to the once-mighty HUNCHES. Too many bands force the darkness and the menace factor; this band just oozes it for fun. BABY TEARS can play my wedding any day. Brilliant. (SD)
(Doomtown)

BAD BRAINS – "171A 1981 Sessions" EP
According to the insert, the three songs on side A of this 7" (different recordings of ones that also appeared on *Black Dots*) were originally intended for a never-released comp the BAD BRAINS assembled in 1982 featuring East Coast hardcore bands. All that's known about these tracks is they were recorded at some point in 1981/'82 at the 171A studios in NYC. The recording is raw, but once you get used to it, this is a very cool glimpse of the band before they completely shed the '70s punk influence and became the hardcore unit we all know and love (the third song, "Redbone in the City," is essentially "Anarchy in the UK" filtered through the BAD BRAINS). As a bonus, the labels feature a drawing of punk and skinhead skeletons wearing AGNOSTIC FRONT and "Punk's Not Dead" T-shirts. Awesome. (JH)
(bootleg)

BALACLAVA – "Shame" EP
This is a crusty/D-beat band from Richmond, Virginia that sounds like pretty much every other HIS HERO IS GONE spin-off with melodic, galloping guitars and throaty vocals with screamy back-ups. Each song on this EP is distinct from the others, but sound so much like the songs of other bands that it doesn't excite. The lyrics are political and deal with social issues, but are basic and typical. The song "Fences" is a lyrical departure from the expected in that it's a little hopeful. This record isn't bad by any means, but it's nothing groundbreaking. There are some really cool moments, like the beginning of the first song on side B and some cool, almost stoner-rock breakdowns that interest me. With that said, I think that I will be keeping an eye on this band to see if they develop their own sound within an already saturated genre of punk. The packaging is super swank, including a poster and download card, and is limited to 500 copies. (MB)
(Forcefield)

BARRACUDAS – "Dog Food/Diet Coke"
(No, not that BARRACUDAS.) A-side is a wonderfully heartfelt (and catchy as hell) ode to the joys of some of the best cheap eats around. "Diet Coke" is a nifty power-pop number. Good times! (DD)
(Bachelor)

BEAT BEAT – LP
Garage meets power-pop done by a bunch of fresh-faced pimple-free Austrains. It's got that retro classic feel whilst still maintaining something shiny, new and sparkly. In a strange way that only my ample-sized ears can hear, it's almost like Australia meets Kent, sort of BILLY CHILDISH getting it on with the SCIENTISTS, follow? I'm digging; it rocks without being rock, it's dance without being PAULA ABDUL, and it's punk without hint of liberty spikes and bondage trousers. In fact, I've elevated the digging to loving. Perfect garage meets perfect power-pop. Monday just got good. (SD)
(Bachelor)

BEAT THE RED LIGHT – "Never A Dull Moment" CD
5 tracks, 25 minutes, so you can tell something is going on this effort. Actually, the results are wonderfully schizophrenic and eminently appealing. Take classic '80s metal, chugga-chugga death metal and upbeat ska in equal measures, add lashings of horns, and well, this is what you're going to end up with. The STAR FUCKING HIPSTERS beautifully mix metal riffage and a bit of pop-ska on their latest record, but not all in the same song! These guys do, and do it with aplomb. Quite special, and it'll get you skanking, slamming, and headbanging all at the same time! (RK)
(TNS)

BEAUTY SCHOOL DROPOUT – "Palookaville (A Retrospective)" CD
This CD is a collection of out-of-print and unreleased demo songs plus three new ones from this Scottish quartet. It looks like they broke up in the early 2000s, but recently regrouped to record some new tunes. Musically, this has more of a pop sound than a punk sound, with the vocals sounding a bit like the SOVIETTES. To my unbiased ears, the new songs don't sound much different than the old ones, which I guess is a good thing if you're a fan who's been waiting the last ten years to hear some new tunes. (BD)
(Boss Tuneage)

BIRDS AND WIRES – 12" EP
This record starts with the most amazing guitar tone—super clean and inviting. The riff it plays carries the song right along with the busy drums trotting into a manic frenzy! The music building and building to an intense crescendo that lasts just long enough to appreciate it. A great opener to introduce an incredible EP by four scene vets from DC. The sound of this record is one of the most amazing aspects, and the heavy vinyl and superb production really paid off as each instrument is immaculately represented. For good reason, too—these songs are well written and powerful as shit. Some have the genteel approach of, say, INDIAN SUMMER or SHARKS KEEP MOVING, while others have a more assertive sound like AMBER INN or FU-

GAZI. From what I understand, there are members of 1905 and LOTUS FUCKER in the band. Really solid indie/emo—beautiful packaging, thick vinyl, strong release. (RM)
(Amor y Lucha)

BIRTHDAY SUITS – "European Tour 2009" EP

This Minnesota duo to me sounds like what emo in 2010 should sound like. That being said, I personally don't want to listen to emo in 2010, but this is good for what it is. It doesn't sound like early-'90s emo nor the Jade Tree BS that was popular at the start of the millennium, but what modern emo should sound like—simple pop hooks played fast and tight with annoyingly forced, whiney vocals. This two-tracker was released for their European tour at the end of 2009 and has decent artwork, though the image doesn't suit the sound so much. (MU)
(P. Trash)

BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA / LYCANTHROPY – split EP

LYCANTHROPY, from the Czech Republic, is one of my current favorite grindcore bands, so I was psyched to get this. I always find it most difficult to review releases I love, and I love this. Speedy grindcore with both male and female vocals. LYCANTHROPY'S take on the style is new and fresh sounding—neither rooted in old-school grindcore or in modern, more technical grindcore. Fast, pissed, political with brutal female vocals. BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA is from Chico, CA and plays thrashy hardcore that ventures into grindcore. "Graffiti Is Art" stood out with its super fast guitar and unique lyrics. Reminds me a little of HUMMINGBIRD OF DEATH. Great release, and if you haven't heard LYCANTHROPY: run, don't walk. (MH)
(Dead Heroes)

BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA / WOJCZECH – split EP

This is a split EP by two bands that are pretty much household names on the international grindcore "circuit." BLACK HOLE OF CALCUTTA are from Chico, CA and these songs are probably the best I've heard from them. The guitar tone is dirtier than I recall, much to my liking. WOJCZECH do an ABC DIABOLO cover that rivals the original, and the band essentially continues in the same vein as their other releases over the past ten-plus years. Strong, half-teutonic, grinding slab o' wax this is. (DB)
(Fucking Kill)

BLACK SPIRIL ROSE / UCHAZIM – split CD

UCHAZIM is up first, and I have no idea what to make of this band. Am-Rep style meets AVAIL with melodic male/female vocals? Sorry, I really can't get into this at all, but I'll give 'em credit for doing their own thing, for sure. BLACK SPIRIL ROSE? Fucking terrible. Radio "heaviness" with truly terribly sung vocals…and then the saxophone came in and made it even worse. I bet they place in the *Eurovision* song contest next year. (AU)
(Papagajuv Hlasatel)

BOILING OVER – "Trash City" EP

Give this Chicago-area straight edge crew about ten minutes of your time and they will let you know just how fucked they think things are in the world. Taking influence from the classic schools of '82 and '88 USHC, but sounding more akin to later approaches towards the style like DEAD NATION or CIVIC PROGRESS, these songs pummel you like the bruised fists of a thug who wants to take his resentment of life out on you. This is the type of straight edge I dig, because no words are wasted on silly songs of friendship; most of the tracks here deal with the frustration of living in a crumbling society where almost everyone seems to be complacent due to various forms of stupidity and ignorance, such as Christianity and patriotism. I'm down. (BG)
(Lifeline)

BONUS ARMY – "Negative Outlooks" EP

Surprisingly rippin' record. The music here delivers a dark ferocity belied by the colorful artwork. Like some other current bands I can think of (SACRED SHOCK, BLIND TO FAITH), BONUS ARMY has a singer that sounds like Human Furnace of RINGWORM. This is a major plus. How do they do it? Such a vicious vocal style. The music is pretty basic, heavy hardcore that doesn't break any new ground but remains solid and generally urgent throughout. With a little more imagination thrown into the songwriting process, this record would be more crushing. But all in all, this is a good EP and definitely a progression from what I've heard of the band's earlier material. (DB)
(Arrest)

BRAJGL – "As Doslouzim, Chci Do Brajglu" CD

Warped Tour melodic punk that is only saved by the Czech-language vocals that give this at least a touch of an edge; otherwise the disc is fifteen songs of goofy, overproduced BLINK 182, SUM 41 and NOFX dumped in The Great Blender of Mediocrity. (WN)
(Papagajuv Hlasatel)

BREWTAL THIRST – "The Hard Work EP" CD

Super boring bar-punk. Lyrics written by a complete knucklehead. Total dude-core. All the songs are about drinking or reference hanging out at a bar. Zzzzzzzzzz. Wake me up when you discover rockabilly and no longer identify as a punk. (FS)
(Wet Brain)

THE CARDIAC KIDZ – "Get Out!" LP

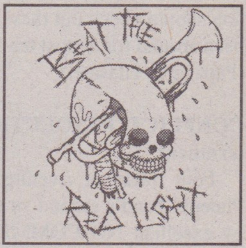
Pretty smokin' collection of tracks by this early San Diego punk band. The CARDIAC KIDZ released two 7"s in the late '70s; the first was comped on *KBD #12* and is a now a certified eBay torpedo bonzer. Like some other Rave-Up retrospectives, *Get Out!* is mostly live stuff but it rages anyway—a total hi-energy blast of sped-up rock'n'roll. This is the type of band whose members were around a couple years before punk exploded (one of the guys has shoulder-length hair, a moustache and a tie on the cover), but they caught on fast. And I mean *fast*—some of the tracks rival RAMONES-circa-*It's Alive* velocities. Speed, melody, snottiness—these KIDZ had it all. (CS)
(Rave-Up)

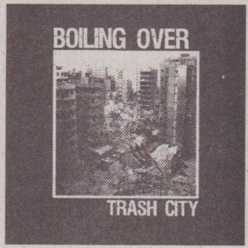
CHIN CHIN – "We Don't Wanna Be Prisoners" EP

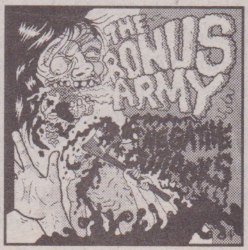
Layla handed this to me and said "It's the Swiss GO-GO'S" and she's pretty right on. High-pitched multiple girl vocals, bedroom danceability, scream-along lyrics. They're less pop and more sparse and jagged with a little bit of psych darkness like SIOUXSIE SIOUX. The A-side is the better-known song but it's kind of the boring-er one (though still killer). The B-side is a little bit weirder (doomy, desperate) and therefore more exciting. Totally worth it, and watch out for an upcoming LP. (MM)
(Mississippi)

CHUCK DAMAGE – LP

This German band plays energetic and enthusiastic hardcore that would likely get a crowd of fans circle pitting, but to me it's just another example of the lowest common denominator of modern bands playing self-described early-'80s-style hardcore. Ultimately, this is a collection of played-out, yet completely unmemorable riffs with none of its own personality whatsoever. One part appears to be directly lifted from DIRECT CONTROL's "Public Safety" as well. (DG)
(Hardware)







CLIMAX – "Zlocin Bez Trestu" CD

Simple but passionate HC punk with some crusty overtones; what it lacks in complexity or originality it makes up for with enthusiasm and aggression. Overall the sound is a bit thin and flat (this would probably sound better on vinyl) though the recording is otherwise good and the guitar does have a cool buzzsaw attack. Above-average lyrics in Czech with English translations included. Plus, the drummer appears to have a *huge* photorealistic Charles Bronson tattoo (the actor, not the band). If you dig straight-forward, no-frills political punk bands like the PIST, you should check out these guys, who I guess have been around for almost ten years. (CS)
(Papagajuv Hlasatel)

CONFLICT RESOLUTION – "American Internment" EP

Four tracks of riveting political hardcore, this Phoenix band's second single is driven completely by excellent NO COMMENT-ish vocals that spit words in quick lacerations against Disney and America's dystopian future—a kind of immediate, direct response to "world events" lyrics that, when combined with powerful, direct thrashing makes for an intense EP. There are back-up choruses, but they are weaker than the magnetic draw of the lead singer by himself; plus or minus a solid cover of SUICIDAL TENDENCIES' "Memories of Tomorrow" (great, but I could almost stand to just hear more this band's own songs!) still leaves enough reason to get running for this limited to 500 EP. Boss. (KS)
(Going Apeshit)

CROCODILES – "Neon Jesus/Neon Autobahn"

A-side is a slow cooker; shimmery electro-garage (you heard it here first!), kinda BLANK DOGS and less tweaked DIGITAL LEATHER. The flip is an instro, which is total snoozeville, but I'm digging the A for sure! (TB)
(Hell Yes)

CUT THE REINS / EXPENDABLE YOUTH – split EP

CUT THE REINS, alphabetically the first band on this split, has a melodic yet heavy hardcore sound on their first tune—in a STORM THE TOWER way, not a TRAGEDY or FROM ASHES RISE way. That's a good thing, as I think STORM THE TOWER is one of the most underrated bands of the last five or so years. On the flip, Chicagoland's EXPENDABLE YOUTH is like a mish-mash of melodi-crust and a more poppy modern HC sound. Kinda hard to imagine but it's da trüf. They have their moments, but some jazz-y elements throw it off from being wholly concise. (JU)
(Injustice of Humanity / Me Distro / Rebel Time)

LOS DAGGERS – "Patinar" EP

Yes! LOS DAGGERS kick out some debaucherous hardcore with the same cool obnoxious vibe as bands like STREET TRASH, IDOL PUNCH and SURF NAZIS MUST DIE, complete with those sassy hardcore vocals that few can get away with. They play with a clean-ish guitar tone and clearer recording than the bands mentioned above, but it works in their favor here. The second song sounds insanely similar to KILLJOY's "Rich Plastic People" off of *Not So Quiet on the Western Front*, but I don't mind because it rages nonetheless. If some friends and I were going to crash some hipster party, skank around the room and piss in some fashionable person's tallcan, I'd throw this record on the stereo to get things started. (DG)
(Discos Humeantes)

THE DAMAGE DONE – "Scream All of Our Clichés" CD

Now this is the kind of record I can get behind. And the lugs working overtime. Throw in the best parts of CRIMPSHINE, DILLINGER FOUR and HÜSKER DÜ, with a modern pop-punk harmonic sensibility and just that right level of gravel in the vocals, and, well, we have ourselves another winner. The lyrical sensibilities seem to be as sharp as the backing-vocal woah-ohs, and definitely well worth snapping up. (RK)
(Better Half)

DEAF AIDS – "Do It Again" EP

Another lost UK power-pop gem reissued by Sing Sing. This time we're treated to the DEAF AIDS' "Do It Again," which is easily the best of the three songs on this. The B-side features "Peep Show," which is a bit slow and plodding, though the DEAF AIDS redeem themselves on the last song, "Aren't People Strange," though it includes the fucked-up line "I'm not a nigger / Can't you see I'm not brown." Not at all sure what that's about. Being from Sheffield or not, pretty inexcusable. Originally released in 1979 in an edition of 250 copies, it's supposedly one of the hardest to find of the rare UK power-pop singles. While a few of the singles in the Sing Sing reissue series have left me a bit flat (ehm, JEFF HILL BAND), this is totally upbeat, catchy and worth being reissued. (IS)
(Sing Sing)

D.F.C. / N.E.K. – split EP

Killer!!! A great split EP with two raw, blasting, flipped-up-baseball-caps, metal-singed thrash bands! D.F.C. from Brazil have existed since the early '90s and show no let-up in ferocity here, with five tracks of chunky, metal-riffed, scalding-vocalled, brutal RATOS DE PORÃO-styled hardcore. On the flip, Nagoya's N.E.K. turn the speed, sloppy ferocity and rawness up a notch while still working within the formula of Brazillian hardcore—acidic vocals in Portuguese over rampaging metallic hardcore that lumbers before speeding into full-tilt mayhem. N.E.K. features Naito, the Nagoya drumming legend from OUT OF TOUCH and C.F.D.L., so there's an edge of the C.F.D.L. total thrash assault running behind this. A well balanced, well thought out split with comics (!), a Too Circle label newsletter in Japanese and lyrics translated into Portuguese, English and Japanese. Both bands' lyrics have the apocalyptic feel of congested cities, clear-cut rain forests and oil wars. Cool! (KS)
(Too Circle)

DIGGER AND THE PUSSYCATS – "DIY" LP

Aussies doing '60s Brit-pop revival with punk undertones. I like rock 'n'roll as much as the next guy, but I think the rock'n'roll revival is a bit played out theses days. It seems like there are tons of bands doing it, but so few who can actually make a good impression. I wouldn't say this is terrible, but doesn't really leave me wanting more. (BD)
(P. Trash)

DISPUTA – "Ultimo Reducto Dis" LP

One-man D-beat (the new thing apparently) from Spain. I'm all about this shit right now—it's not going to win any awards for originality but it does what it says on the packet. For some reason, D-beat in Spanish totally works. The music is pretty straightforward VARUKERS style, but the vocals are like a Spanish Cal. Epic. (TB)
(Grita o Muere)

DISTRUST / OSMANTIKOS – split CD

DISTRUST from Singapore and OSMANTIKOS from Malaysia both play heavy crust hardcore. DISTRUST has an older crusty/D-beat sound like SIEGE or DISCHARGE—with metal leanings, as there are a number of guitar solos. Two of DISTRUST'S tracks are covers: one from BLOODSTONE and the other from MINUS. OSMANTIKOS isn't as heavy or metal, more like EXTINCTION OF MANKIND. It's more of a punk/crust sound with multiple vocalists and more melody. Both bands might be by-the-numbers but both pull it off. The lyrics are harshly political and OSMANTIKOS includes long descriptions of what each track is about. The descriptions are longer than the lyrics. Need more crust/D-beat? Pick this up. (MH)
(Epidemic)

DOTS / VIRUS – split EP

It took five labels and two bands to release a single in an edition of 280 copies—sounds appropriate for Italy. These two bands are from Verona and this single is amazing—try to find one if you can. VIRUS is a duo. The drummer also plays guitar at the same time. The other half of the band is the vocalist. It sounds raw and rude in the best possible way, reminding me very much of PUSSY GALORE. The DOTS sound more like a LA hardcore band circa 1979, but singing in Italian. They fit in four fast and short songs, and VIRUS offers three punches to the face. (MU)
(Depression House)

DRONE THRONE / TOAD – split LP

Both bands are from Arizona, but they represent pretty disparate styles of music. DRONE THRONE plays a pretty standard sludge metal/punk hybrid that gets a little too stoner-y at times for my taste, paying homage to EYEHATEGOD, SLEEP, GRIEF, and the like. I definitely relate to their side of the split more. It has some strong riffs and pretty Zen moments. To my ears, TOAD fits the category of indie-punk, sounding something like MILEMARKER, HOT WATER MUSIC, and 45 GRAVE in a blender. Their tunes are catchy but in a way that seems facile and unchallenging. It definitely seems they could have a wide, mainstream appeal. DRONE THRONE wins out on this split. (DB)
(Boue)

DRONGOS FOR EUROPE – "Cage the Rage" CD

I guess this original UK82-era band has been back together for a while now; no idea if they stick to the reunion-act club circuit or play more DIY-type shows. The early DRONGOS FOR EUROPE

singles had a somewhat charming mix of amateur sincerity and rudimentary catchiness, whereas their newer stuff is much more polished and modern-sounding, both in terms of production and songwriting. Either way, it's cool they're doing new material (rather than, say, releasing a live album of all their old stuff). *Cage the Rage* has new versions of two tracks that appeared on their 2007 *Dance When Maggie's Dead* EP, plus fifteen more, making for nearly an hour of DRONGOS. The songs range from fair to good street-punk with sing-along choruses—I was reminded of bands like COMPLETE CONTROL, OXYMORON, and even early RANCID. Pretty solid for a reunited band that started 30 years ago. (CS)
(DFE)

DRUID PERFUME – "Don't Eat Them They're Poison/ Honk Your Horn" EP

It's another release from these Detroit weirdos. This EP sounds like ROCKET FROM THE TOMBS crossed with a no-wave affectation and circus music. The beginning of the A-side is a bluegrass girls' chorus that breaks into carnival-like horns, piano, bass and drums with the singer anguishing in yelps over the need to taste a morsel of something poisonous. This song convincingly tells this story up to succumbing to the irresistible poison. The B-side begins with an infectious bass-line and swings into a catchy song with a ton of changes. This stuff isn't for everyone, but within the chaos there is a well-executed, very creative structure. I think this is the best DRUID PERFUME release yet. (MB)
(X!)

DRY-ROT – "Philistine" LP

This is my first time hearing DRY-ROT for more than one or two songs. While I'm definitely not the biggest fan of Christianity, other than the "Christ Is Lord" graphic in the insert that they probably put there to "fuck with people," their trinity of imaginary friends in no way meddles with this record. Things tend to jump back and forth between styles, and bunches of songs seem to listen like chapters that make up a whole. The hardcore on this record is generally characterized by a lot of alternating between drum-fill parts and single-note riffing followed by a breakdown or something else—maybe sonically reminiscent of the first COLD SWEAT LP. DRY-ROT also has a taste for songs comprised of leading bass lines, usually something funky and sinister, with guitar improvising notes or noise or whatever over the bass, and the interplay bearing similarities to that between the guitar and bass on *The Process of Weeding Out*, though there's no free jazz here. The B-side starts out like something you might've heard between COLLECTIVE SOUL and PEARL JAM on the radio in 1995, but with the vocals sounding like they're being manipulated manually (think of a record being played backwards), which is a cool effect and something that's used on a few other songs as well. It continues in a similar fashion to the A-side before ending on a slightly more mellow note. It's an interesting record that's eclectic in the right way, and 100% competent in terms of music and songwriting for being this ambitious, but there's something about it that's too sanitized for me to want to go out and get my own copy. Even the hardcore songs, which definitely have all the right ingredients and abrasion, sound too contained in the production to let the spite bleed through. I have yet to see them live, so I can't say if it's something inherent in the band or just some venom that was lost in the recording. (DG)
(Parts Unknown)

ESKATOL – "Blodorn" CD

Perhaps this might have a few too many "modern" elements for my liking? The drums almost enter tech territory from time to time, and the guitars flirt with the bad type of melodic leads that modern metalcore have killed forever, but fuck man, everything here is just too damn good for me to not love it. The dual vocals work perfectly, and when they slow it down, I start to hear ENTOMBED...and those guitar leads, half of them sound like HIS HERO anyway. Yeah dudes, this Norwegian shit is fukkn good. (WN)
(Kjepp Kjappesens Raske Skiver)

EXPENDABLE YOUTH – "2016" EP

Fuck, maybe I'm just getting older, but earnest left politics just make me want to vomit. The years have not been kind to my youthful idealism. The sad part is that I'm not even quite 30 yet. As I descend into jaded-old-manhood, the lyrics to records like this one can do nothing more than make me roll my eyes and sneer a cynical sneer at the hope for meaningful change still being held onto by the latest CrimethInc- or college-educated would-be revolutionaries. The music here is nothing spectacular, just competently played modern crustcore, blending screamo and metallicrust influences into a tasty pablum for the dreadlocks-and-backpacks crowd. It isn't particularly offensive to my sensibilities, although I would never actively engage with it. But does anyone honestly think that anything is going to be accomplished by writing lyrics about how *baaaaad* capitalism and prisons are to the poor, or how the 2016 Olympics need to be *resisted!!!!! now!!!! really!!!!*, or by including lengthy and poorly-written song explanations referencing Mikhail Bakunin and Angela Y. Davis? This makes me want to put my sixteen-year-old past self in a headlock and cut his fucking hair. Just... just give up. It's not worth it. Activism is a fucking graveyard for long-held cherished beliefs in social change and the merits of progressive politics. (XV)
(Shaman)

EXTORTION – "Loose Screws" 10"

I've heard a bit about this Australian band, but this is my first time checking them out. Totally pummeling, ultra-harsh fastcore with occasional slow/moshy parts that do a nice job of breaking up the speed attack. My only complaint, and I don't know if it's the recording or the heavy guitar tone or what, is this has a very "modern" feel, which I associate with more clean-cut hardcore bands (as opposed to, says, HERESY). Other than that, this is cool. (JH)

JAD FAIR / HUMAN ADULT BAND – split EP

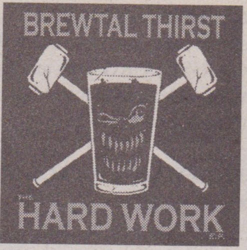
HUMAN ADULT BAND is repetitive blog-rock from New Jersey, JAD FAIR is an older man, this record is a piece of shit. I have no time for this 3:00 A.M.-Midwest-college-radio dreck. I can't imagine anyone listening to this more than once, but I suppose anything's possible. (BB)
(Third Uncle)

THE FAKE BOYS – "This Is Where Our Songs Live" CD

This is really poppy punk/borderline power-pop along the ways of YUM YUMS and DESCENDENTS but is lacking something. The material just seems a bit flat. When you get this pop, you gotta deliver. (RL)
(Arrest)

FEELING OF LOVE – "School Yeah" EP

Over the past two years, some really great and interesting new sounds have been coming out of France, and FEELING OF LOVE are part of the weirdos over there making things happen. I should add that I'm biased against the French, so it takes a lot for me to give a nod to the frogs for doing something good. This three-song EP is the third release I've heard by the band, and all three cover different sounds so it's hard to pigeonhole FEELING OF LOVE into one particular style. They describe themselves as trying to mix early-'90s JON SPENCER BLUES EXPLOSION with SUICIDE and SPACEMEN 3 and I am unable to describe it any better than that, but it's important to note



that each song has its own feel. The B-side of this single takes the lyrics of fellow Frenchman SERGE GAINSBOURG over an almost Eastern drone song with added feedback and a simple rhythm. (MU)
(Sweet Rot)

FIGHTING CHANCE – "A Lifetime of Basic Cable" CD

Not quite sure how this disc slipped past the eagle-eared censors at this here mag, but er, despite the fact of me dear mother suggesting that "this one sounds like you could dance to it," it's not quite up to snuff. Histrionic, overblown pop for the 40-somethings. And I should know. I'm one of the them (40-somethings that is, not overblown and histrionic). At its best, it sounds like a bad outtake from the POLICE's "Regatta De Blanc" or the first JOE JACKSON disc. Unfortunately, it more often falls into HOOTIE AND THE BLOWFISH territory. I'm sure they're real nice blokes, but there's only so much one can take… (RK)
(self-released)

FOR THE WORSE / WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES – split EP

WEDNESDAY NIGHT HEROES from Alberta, Canada play generic, parent-friendly melodic punk in the Epitaph/Fat Wreck Chords mold. Their MySpace bio, clearly written by some third-rate PR goon, claims they've "been taking the Canadian punk scene by storm since their inception in 1997." Sound like a winner, eh? Shockingly, no. One original tune and a ZERO BOYS cover makes me wonder, what's the point? I had slightly higher hopes for FOR THE WORSE, who I believe have a reputation in their home state of Massachusetts as being pretty "crazy." Sort of an oi/hardcore thing with slightly high-pitched vocals. Not the *worst*, but this isn't very good either. (JH)
(Give Praise / Patac)

FY FAN – "Golden Times 2007-2009" CD

Full-throttle hardcore from Sweden's FY FAN, with the tracks from the Feral Ward EP, the Adult Crash EP and a handful of new tracks all slapped together for last year's Japan tour. For those not in the know about these dudes, it's a raw, pissed, insolent attack that draws equally from '80s US hardcore, '80s Swedish punk and alcohol. Swedish lyrics, Japanese translations and the usual top-notch packaging and layout that I've come to expect from Too Circle—great shit all around. (WN)
(Too Circle)

GENDERS – "Day of Choices" EP

In the onesheet that came with this 7", Jeff of Prgnt Records writes "Any input you are able to give us would be awesome." I like this record, but first some input since you asked: the record's opening riff sets things up well, but the one it goes into kills the momentum with the whirlwind drumming instead of something more pounding; the songs could be more distinctive as a whole; I can't read the cursive writing; and that emo sing-along is not the best way to end the final song. Other than that, this seems influenced by a mishmash of different kinds of hardcore, mostly on the thrashier and more pissed side of things. The songs themselves lack any sort of tangible structure and perpetually change tempo throughout, including great breakdowns that that pop up unexpectedly and make you want to mosh on the spot, which is always awesome. It's cool sonically, but sort of middle-of-the-road overall, and I think I'll end this with a pat on the head and a "I could see the next record being a lot better." (DG)
(Prgnt)

GEPØPEL – "No One Can Stop Advance" EP

This classic Dutch band came out with only a few releases, but were intense and distinctive, with a disordered HC sound not unlike a messy BGK. The six tracks here employ basic-as-possible songs, mostly founded on repetitious guitar riffs and a slashing instrumental sound. Aside from one curious tune with an experimental mix of synth and a swelling backdrop of guitars, the remainder of the material is uniformly aggressive that improves markedly with higher volume. Not quite as arresting as their debut, but time hasn't interfered with the urgency of their sound. (SS)
(Burka for Everybody / Superfluous)

GET LAID – "Pretty Weathered" 10"

With the, uh, cost-effective packaging and slightly thin sound, I got the impression this might be this band's first release, but no way is this their first band. The songs are raging and tight, mixing it up, staying fast but not spending all their time playing straight 4/4. They're able to write songs that have great flow instead of just sounding like different parts grafted onto each other. Kids would do spastic dancing to this band. They are grounded in hardcore, but get wild and fucking bring it. The more I play this record, the more I'm into it. (JM)
(self-released)

GHETTO WAYS – "I Always Wanted You" LP

Indie-pop meets rock'n'roll with a '70s-meets-'90s feel to it. Unfortunately I like the '80s better. Their slower songs remind me of the MAGNETIC FIELDS, otherwise it reminds me of a less weird FORESKIN 500. Not hooky or energetic enough to warrant any great interest from a "punk" perspective. (AD)
(P. Trash)

GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE – "It Wasn't Made for Us" EP

Another outstanding effort by these thrash/pop-punk weirdoes from SoCal. One of the most commendable aspects to GOD EQUALS GENOCIDE is that no song they make sounds even vaguely similar to another. It's truly a smattering of styles, like some kind of stupid tie-dyed shirt you made at summer camp—and I'm not calling them stupid by any means. Actually, they are super rad, and make any style they decide to delve into sound amazing. For example, the record kicks off with a lo-fi garage song, but the guitar riff sounds like something off *Slippery Subject*-era BANANAS. Then song two, they flip out and it's mosh-pit city. The first thing you hear on the B-side is a folk song with jangly guitars in the vain of THIS BIKE IS A PIPE BOMB—kind of reminiscent of that song "Body Count," where it's folksy, but still kind of intense. Anyway, this record bounces all over the place, but it's always going in the right direction. The only drawback is that the recording is kind of shitty. It has that demo tape/practice recording quality to it, which is probably intentional. (FS)
(Razorcake / Recess)

GODS OF GAMBLE – "Mind the Pain" CD

Straight-ahead hard guitar rock. Nothing more, nothing less. The singer sounds like DANZIG without the dramatics. Skulls on the cover and a photo of the haggard-looking band drinking and smoking on the inside. (CK)
(Stampace)

GOOFBALL – "Si" CD

"Old school hard rock power trio" they say, which I guess is close enough: sounds more like RUSH meets TSOL Mach II to me. Fairly reverent KING CRIMSON and CREAM covers. Major selling point is member Bruno DeSmartass of FLIPPER). (DD)
(self-released, www.goofballsf.com)

GRANDE COBRA – "Echoes of Rebellion" LP

When you wear the influences so strongly on your sleeve, you'd better supercede them, adapt them to your own personal vision... or you just live in their shadow. DRIVE LIKE JEHU/ROCKET FROM THE CRYPT lite from Australia. Ten tracks of the same guitar tone and deconstructed '77 punk attack, but the vocals push their twang to an unlistenable FLESHEATERS level, and the music overall lacks the drive and melodic songwriting knack that made those Jon Reis bands work. Recorded in 2006 at Toe Rag, the cover looks like *Yank Crime*'s PETTIBON-style ink work. Limited to 750, this is proficient and solid enough to probably work live with the vocals subdued a bit under the volume of amps, but as it stands…do you really miss RFTC enough to accept an imitation sans horn section? (KS)
(Top Five)

HAMMER BROS. – "The Kids Are Dead" LP

The first thing that struck me about this record was the art, which looks like a second-rate imitation of a SABERTOOTH ZOMBIE cover. The second thing that struck me was the mix: guitars *waaaay* up front, drums right below, vocals buried somewhere beneath and the bass nowhere to be found on most tracks. Musically they're trying for INTEGRITY or RINGWORM circa 1995. I've definitely heard worse attempts at that style, but bands like ROT IN HELL do it infinitely better. HAMMER BROS. (just what the world needs, more video game references in hardcore) are not doing themselves any favors by mixing elements of a more modern hardcore sound in. Lyrically this is firmly in the vein of CEREMONY or their lesser kin TRASH TALK, vaguely pissed off but without ever really saying why. This isn't as bad as I thought it would be, but it's not good enough for me to buy a copy, either. (XV)
(Arrest)

HATRED SURGE – "Deconstruct" LP

I have no idea who I'm writing this review for—everyone I know who would want this (amazing) record bought it months ago. But I'll have to assume that someone out there somehow doesn't know about it. HATRED SURGE has, through no fault of their own, become the darlings of the hype-based,

eBay-high-bidding, forum-shit-talking, collector scum power-violence scene. Unlike many of the bands that these pathetic losers latch onto to justify their internet existence, HATRED SURGE has serious fucking chops and write some damned fine songs, if these blasts of adrenaline-fueled anti-musicality can properly be called songs. Along with their compatriots in IRON LUNG, IN DISGUST, PLF, the ENDLESS BLOCKADE and a few others, HATRED SURGE is one of the few bands currently described by lazy fucks (such as myself) as "powerviolence" that lives up to the legacy that comes with that term. This LP represents their best efforts thus far. (XV)
(Rescued From Life)

HEADACHE CITY – "We Can't Have Anything Nice" LP
This is a pretty killer album—garage punk with a healthy amount of power-pop, kind of like a modern-day Midwest version of the BUZZCOCKS. All the songs are super catchy and soft around the edges with melodic and sometimes harmonizing back-up vocals. That's what power-pop is all about, and they nail it! All the songs are totally danceable, and half of them you can kind of sing along to them the first time you hear 'em. Cover art is real cool looking, too. (FS)
(P. Trash)

HEIL HIDIOT / WEEKEND WARRIOR – split EP
It's always nice to see a split with two good bands, since we all have a bunch where only one side gets played, right? WEEKEND WARRIOR hails from Costa Mesa and slap down some seriously chaotic spastic thrash along the lines of ANTI-SCHISM and later-period CHARLES BRONSON, with a hint of crust thrown in for good measure. The lyrics are nihilistic and negative, and one song has a funny line, "we all love Bad Brains but we got no PMA!" Classic. HEIL HIDIOT is an Italian hardcore band I haven't heard before, but they just might be my favorite of the two here—fucking amazing female vocals and a furious storm of pure, traditional hardcore to back her up. The lyrics touch on sleazy, creepy men; girls who cannot be independent of their boyfriend; and poser pseudo-intellectualism in hardcore. This is a band to watch out for. (BG)
(Mass Media)

HELL CITY KINGS – "The Road to Damnation" LP
Beer-swilling tattoo guys who probably refer to themselves as "bastards" and hang out in some crummy bar. TURBONEGRO rip-off from Texas. This is what ANNIHILATION TIME VII would sound like, when the only original member is Chris Grande and they don't even plug his bass in anymore. Maybe this is rock'n'roll revival; sounds like a tenth-rate KISS cover band. These guys probably all have long-term girlfriends. I think they just referred to themselves as scallywags. "Scuuuumbaaaaaggsss and scaaaalllyyywwaaaaggggsss"—yeah, they're saying it like that. You know how RANCID and BLINK 182 had that side-project where they had a wigger dude rap while they played like shit? Imagine if they did like a metal version of that but the wigger was replaced by some fuckin' barback. They'll probably take the "funny quotes" from this review and put them in a blog on their MySpace sayin' "WE DON'T GIVE A FUCK!!!!!" and like pretending it's cool that they got a bad review, but they obviously put at least a modicum of effort into this *long-playing record* and judging by the full-cover back cover (a *full-color* picture of these obviously fun-loving party guys) they're trying a little bit and failing quite a lot. If these guys come to SF, they're playing at the Parkside, if you know what I mean. I can't stop writing about this record. This is some seriously inspiring shit, "y'all." Real talk though: this thing fuckin' blows. (BB)
(Cutthroat)

HITS – "Living with You Is Killing Me" CD
Any record that starts off with a "Fuck yeah" after a guitar intro makes me involuntarily roll my eyes. Geesh. By the way, that song is called "Fuck the Needy." Hilarious. I can tell right off creativity is not going to be a priority on this CD. And it doesn't get much better from there. The singer does his best New York junky whine. The music is hard rock. There are some ballads. Need I say more? (CK)
(Merenoise)

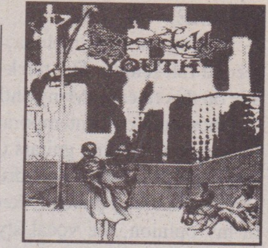
HOOVES NOT HANDS – "Swollen" CD
I hear an almost industrial sound; not like the electronic/rock style, but like the music has a cold, almost sterile sense about it. Nothing on this album develops into what I would consider an interesting listen. Could be compared to the MELVINS or some other dredgy, riff-oriented rock band from fifteen years ago—HELMET maybe. This is not hypnotic enough to be enchanting and not heavy enough to be much fun. (RM)
(Amplified Noise)

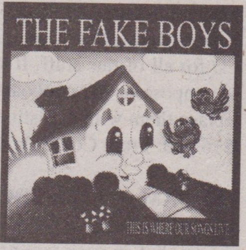
THE HUSSY / ZYGOTEENS – "Round 'n' Round/The River No More" split EP
Wisconsin bands unite! This is super fun pop-punk that's lyrically clever and musically talented. The HUSSY is total rock, complete with sleazy, distorted solo-ing and bizarre, chant-like lyrics that are almost provocative, but instead make no sense—which rules because it makes it super easy to bounce around to it and not be bored. ZYGOTEENS are less cock-rock, and way more boppy-poppy-teeny-punk. I can only imagine them playing a basement show at 2:00 A.M. after everyone's had, like, 1,000 beers and then we all go apeshit because they are such good pop writers. (HD)
(Big Action)

IDLE HANDS / MUTAGENS – split 45
Two bands cover some klassix: the PLUGZ' "Mindless Contentment" and the SHOCK's "This Generation's on Vacation." IDLE HANDS take on the former and it reminds me of why Cissie always says that bands should never put covers onto vinyl… I have less possessive feelings about the SHOCK's output, but again this cover seems sort of pointless and throwaway. I can't imagine anyone playing this record more than once unless they had either never heard the other versions of the songs, or were friends with the band. Sorry… (LG)
(P. Trash)

IGNORANCE – "World of Waste" CD
Usually, if a punk band uses the word "ignorance," it is to ridicule the general stupidity of the population that contributes to society's ills, but these guys wear the term as a badge of honor. "What the fuck is Darfur?" they ask, "if it's not in New England I don't give a fuck." OK. "Apathy is my one virtue," another lyric boasts. OK, if that's what makes you proud. "I wanna fucking hang myself!" Really? Someone in my family hung himself; you think it's fucking romantic? As for the music, it's your typical screaming-angry-guy 'core with lots of power chords; it reminds me of early SUB ZERO. Zzzzzzzzzz. (BG)
(Arrest)

INDIAN WARS – "If You Want Me" EP
Four tracks of reverb-soaked, psyched-out garage, a sound I love by a band that's just won over my hard-fought affections. Its got that slight '60s folk feel that has been recently mastered by the MANTLES, along with that big-velvet-cushion gorgeousness of KURT VILE. Throw in some of the dance-infectious thud of the OH SEES, and basically what you end up with what is possibly my favorite EP of the year. I love Bachelor Records, I love Vancouver (even though I've never been) and most importantly I love INDIAN WARS. (SD)
(Bachelor)





INFAME – "II" LP

Hailing out of Barcelona, INFAME deliver their second full-length. The thick production works just fine on this release. Many anthemic tracks here having moments of contemporary Japanese hardcore. Layers of screaming guitars (slightly metallic) over pounding, bass-drenched drums. The songs drive and have enough punch to keep your head bobbing. In my opinion, the vocal style is what makes the record—something about the growl that keeps my interest. Nice job. (MS)
(Packebusch / Kamaset Levyt / Shill / Ravachol Prod. / Grita o Muere)

INTERNAL AUTONOMY – 2xCD

This two-disc set compiles a hand-picked and remastered selection of nearly 40 tracks from the various demos, tape comps, and vinyl records INTERNAL AUTONOMY put out throughout the late '80s and early '90s. Bored the typical punk sound that dominated at the time, they took the more experimental approach to anarcho punk (similar to the APOSTLES), incorporating elements of folk and goth into their sound. Add to that a singer that sounded not unlike SOUXSIE SIOUX. There's a lot to plow through on here, but this is the first time on CD for all of this stuff. If your tapes are starting to decompose in the cupboard, now's your chance to replace them with a pristine digital version. (AM)
($16 ppd: Front Cover Productions)

THE JAM – "At the BBC" LP

The JAM should need absolutely *no* introduction to you, but in case you aren't familiar with them, they are pretty much *the* ultimate Mod-revival band, ever! I know that there are numerous others from that era that are also amazing (the CHORDS, PURPLE HEARTS, etc.) but the JAM deservedly are the best, not only for all they accomplished in regards to their popularity, but the songs themselves stand out above all else. On this album you get a compilation of tracks taken from four sessions recorded at the BBC between 1977 to 1981—three of which were with the legendary John Peel! There are sixteen tracks in total including the massive hits "The Modern World," "All Around the World," and one of my personal all-time favourites "The Eton Rifles." I believe that for the most part these sessions were recorded live with minimal studio production, so you get a pretty raw version of all these songs, but the quality of the BBC studios is legendary so they are all excellent and enjoyable to listen to. There is also a very informative insert included, so if you're a fan of the JAM, then this is probably necessary for you to at least check out… (ML)
(bootleg)

LES JOLIS –LP

From Marseilles, (the dirty part of) France, LES JOLIS deliver the goods all for those into slightly poppy, slightly art-damaged retro punk (HUBBLE BUBBLE, anyone?). At first I thought this was a reissue of some genius rarity I'd never heard of. *Succès!* (DD)
(Scanner)

LAST COMMUNION – LP

This is pretty OK. Gravel-voiced and melodic almost-hardcore from Canada. Definitely in line with early MANIFESTO JUKEBOX, PHOENIX FOUNDATION, LEATHERFACE and the like, but faster. Cool wander-y guitar parts with the vocal stylings of them thar previously mentioned nutters. Rounded out with a cover of the HÜSKER's "Girl Who Lives on Heaven Hill." (JU)
(P. Trash)

LOS LAXANTES – "No No No No" EP

Today in the age of mass globalization and instant access via the internet, punk rock does not seem so radical when rebellion is a readily accepted and a packaged commodity in every mall throughout the First World. So think about an Argentinean punk band recording in somebody's kitchen in 1981 in the height of a fascist dictatorship. Most would fall the way of the goosestep but LOS LAXANTES raise the banner high. Not quite as edgy as their contemporaries LOS VIOLADORES, but a pretty ripping '77 style punk thing here, not unlike, say, a more serious TOY DOLLS or DICKIES. The more I play this, the more infectious it becomes and the easier it is to see that they are Argentinean legends… (RR)
(no label, www.myspace.com/loslaxantes)

LIVERBALL – "Bullet Bullet" CD

So I guess this is a couple of EPs from the early '90s by this Pittsburgh band. It's a mediocre bar band that was the sound of the moment back then. Hi-rev MC5/STOOGES lite… Bored the shit out of me. (TB)
(Buck-N-Hour, no info)

MADMEN – LP

What you have here is a one-man band playing FUCKED UP freeform, improvisational punk rock. Some parts of this record have manic guitar riffs with snappy drumming and eccentric shouted vocals. The singing and guitars take on a scared rabbit feel as you sprint through eight songs of pure detached musical experimentation. On the rare occasions that the song slows a mite and gels for a moment, this could remind you of the DICKS during the *Kill from the Hearts* sessions. The musician(s) on this venture are sheer genius—it sounds as if a very talented man was fucking around in his home studio and someone got a hold of the tapes and bootlegged them. Play this record several times. It will grow on you. This record is disorienting. This record is very good! (BR)
(self-released, no info)

THE MAKEOUTS – "In a Strange Land" LP

When I see a band named the MAKEOUTS, I'm expecting some sort of '60s-sounding garage punk, probably with a healthy dose of pop thrown in. From Sweden, these guys deliver the goods, though I think there isn't as much pop as I was expecting. That works just fine for me. It's slick and sloppy at the same time. The pace is slow at times, but never slows down. Other times, they really pick it up. Great LP. All four members sport RayBan sunglasses and one has a moustache that looks like it belongs to a seventh grader. (KK)
(Bachelor)

MARVELOUS DARLINGS – "The Only Ones for Miles/Follow Me Home"

Despite their great name, I found this to be more lackluster rock'n'roll with an indie-pop lean…or the other way around. It sounds a bit formulaic; not wild and crazy enough or just lacking any great energy. I think they're shooting for the REIGNING SOUND but fall way short. (AD)
(P. Trash)

MEDICATION – "This Town" LP

I like this record in small doses. If I leave it on the turntable for an entire side, I just seem to walk off into the next room, start reading or do something else similarly distracting and distracted. The music is slow, quiet and pleasant. The vocals are comforting in a way that could easily put you to sleep. Putting on one or two songs at a time is the way to do it. That way I can pay attention to the pretty melodies and pained, engaging, whispered vocals. (CK)
(HoZac)

MESS FOLK – "Something I Remember" EP

OK, so last month I reviewed MESS FOLK's demo and I politely asked for less reverb. *Thank you!* This EP is basically perfect and all three tracks are bangin', keeping with what I liked most about the demo: mid-tempo slow-pop-depressed-scrap-paper-burning. This recording is so excellent for the style of the songwriting, which has a much stronger influence from the FALL and other talk-sing psychedelic apathy bands such as PAVEMENT (the really early years) than I initially thought. With a moderate amount of reverb on the half-asleep vocals and the guitars and percussion in the back and scratchy bass in the front, this EP is pushing you up the insurmountable hill of waking up in the morning. My favorite track is the second one, "Give Me a Gun." It's slow, gritty and perversely/comically unhappy. MESS FOLK is a very special band and I hope they stick around. (HD)
(HoZac)

MICKEY – "She's So Crazy / I Am Your Trash"

This is SWEET—glammy with just a tiny bit of twang to it. If you are a fan of music that is catchy as all hell, this is for you. The A-side is bouncy and up-beat and the B-side is a ballad-type number that is a little mellower. Both rock in different ways. I will look for this one. (KK)
(HoZac)

MODERN ACTION – "Modern Action/Bleeding Red"

Apparently this has members of the BODIES and the BRIEFS, and that would be a pretty good place to start a description of their sound. It has the BODIES pace with the smart-arse hooks of the BRIEFS. The whole thing has an England 1977-78 obscure 7" kinda vibe…even the name. Very good. (AD)
(Modern Action)

MODERN ACTION – "Radioactive Boy/Problem Child"

Distorted, rocking lo-fi punk rock from our very own back yard, Sonoma. Over in the blink of an eye, but still managing to dig those catchy choruses straight in to yer noggin. Hooks flying from its ying-yang, enough head-bobbing moments to give AC/DC a hard run for its money and even a memorable instrumental just to whet that appetite even more.

Think the RIP-OFFS, think the MUMMIES and while you're lusting, throw in some GUITAR WOLF. (SD)
(Modern Action)

THE MOJOMATICS – "Tears Fall Down/In the Meanwhile"

Wherein a kick-out-the-blues noisy rootsy combo stretches out a bit with good results. "Tears Fall Down" is more polished than I remember them, but in a JOE MEEK-esque way, so there's still plenty of weirdness. Nice! "In the Meanwhile" is somewhat redolent of late-'60s STONES—and it works! (DD)
(Hell Yes)

MUJERES – "Black Dog Inside My Soul" EP

There was a time when bands like the MUMMIES and the RIP-OFFS ruled the world. The sound of '60s garage rock through a punk filter kicked everyone up the arse. Now that all the garage heads are listening to fuckin' shoegaze, bands like these are going the way of the dinosaur. It's nice to see the Spaniards carrying the torch for primitive garage punk'n'roll. This band sound like the OBLIVIANS, BLACK LIPS and MUMMIES all rolled into one. Three tracks…all raw as fuck and pressed *loud*!!! (TB)
(Discos Humeantes)

MYELIN SHEATHS – "Do the Mental Twist" EP

I am surprised the fuzzed-out, drenched-in-distortion sound is still a "thing." Especially for a band like MYELIN SHEATHS, who seem to have the potential to be a really cool trashy punk band. The A-side of this EP has two songs that are catchy, punchy and seem to have funny lyrics (from what I can make out). But the whole damn thing is covered in fuzz, giving it this ethereal sound that seems out of place. The B-side is a longer, slower song that adapts well to the covering, but personally I'd like to see it all cleaned up, too. If you have good songs, there is no need to hide them. (CK)
(HoZac)

MYELIN SHEATHS – "Do the Mental Twist" EP

More lo-fi drug music, but I can get behind this because it spends its time rocking the fuck out rather than navel gazing. Music is blown out and shimmery, like ECHO AND THE BUNNYMEN or a live JESUS AND MARY CHAIN. Coupled with awesome layered female vocals, this is the best thing I've heard on this label. Killer shit, especially the slip "Drugstore/Pharmacy." Niiiiice one Canaduh. (TB)
(HoZac)

MYELIN SHEATHS – "Stackticon" EP

Rambunctious garage mess, with spazzed-out trebled guitars and the best fuck-you lady vocals, making for a savage attack of epic proportions that you would be a fool not to partake in. This sounds dangerous and bratty; music for kids that carry knives and know all the words to *Easter Everywhere* and *Outta Here*. Yeah I namedropped my favorite garage record of the '90s—there's something GORIES about this, the primitive dreaminess that many aim for but so few can get a handle on. This makes me wanna see this band play so fucking bad… It's an exciting record, my friends. The sort of thing you want to listen to over and over 'til your neighbors wanna cut their ears off… (LG)
(Bachelor)

MY MIND – "Path Masher" EP

Is this really an EP? It's like eleven songs long, but it's on a 7". I thought an EP could be eight songs at the very most. Can someone please check up on this for me? Anyhow, back to MY MIND. Most of the time, this EP sounds a lot like '90s Brit-pop and indie-pseudo-emotional rock similar to SUPERGRASS, SUPERDRAG, BLUR, and (dare I say?) ONION FLAVORED RINGS. The guitars are jangly, the vocals are really clear and the unmistakably blues-based pop-song structure is incredibly predictable right up until they throw in a strange mathy-jazz drums breakdown or a plodding rockabilly chorus. Maybe it's just the intense clarity of the recording, but the change-ups are really jarring, like if someone made a mix-tape for you of only the very, very best pop songs ever written but stopped every song right before the really, really good part happens. I give props to the band for the excellent and detailed packaging, which includes everything from the lyrics to extraneous (but well-made) art. I guess what it all adds up to is that this band is trying to do *a lot* of things. (HD)
(Suicide Tax / Badmaster)

THE NASTY – "Graves" CD

A pretty intense record with a lot of personality and brute force. Flying through twelve songs in fourteen minuets, the NASTY drop a super charged and maliciously catchy release! With throat-shredding screams backed by rad guitars, these songs *rip* and keep it fucking infectious. They rage and fall apart, saved by sick drum fills or a lingering bass line. Thrashing breakdowns and ape-shit choruses to put it fucking down! I'm putting money on their live show being a stage-dive/dogpile extravaganza! Really fresh songwriting and sincere intensity to boot! Forget coffee in the morning, just throw on this CD before work and get amped! (RM)
(Arrest)

NATIVE CATS – "Catspaw/Lemon Juice"

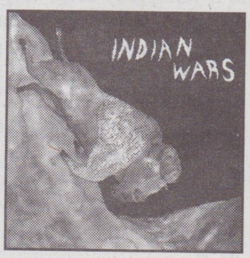
The drum machine hits and my hopes sink… But it's not that bad. Primal, loose post-punk made by some Orstralians, just drums and bass and vocals, YOUNG MARBLE GIANTS style. If Alison Stratton were a dude. There's an uneasy undertone to these sounds, the discomfort and disconcerting feel that early GANG OF FOUR 7"s impart. It feels like private music, internal and intrusive all at once. I don't know, this seems like it was right up my street, but it wasn't for whatever reason. I think it's the sort of record that a lot of you will get into though, if you like the out-of-body sounds of post-punk disorder. (LG)
(White Denim)

NEO BOYS – "Give Me the Message" EP

I read Joe Carducci's *Enter Naomi* a few years back, where he makes a point of stating his disappointment with this 7" in comparison to their apparent greatness live. I wish I could have seen this band play a show that was good enough to blow this record outta the water—it is one of my favorite artifacts of early-'80s girl punk. This a Euro boot unfortunately—the individual(s) that put it out send the band copies via Portland radio station KBOO, with the *MRR* address as the return address apparently. Weird. Anyway, I love this record and it has been a top want for a long time, so on one hand I am psyched to have a decent sounding vinyl copy, on the other hand… The eternal question of bootlegs! I think this is one of the most perfect 7"s; it's got this desperate melancholic sound, you can tell it was recorded by Greg Sage, and that they are a distinctly Northwest punk band. The lyrics to "Rich Man's Dream" get me every time. Kim's voice is so powerful. There's a reprint of the NEO BOYS interview that Erin Yanke did on KBOO that ran in *MRR* #262… (LG)
(bootleg)

NERVE CITY – "Recordings 2007-2008" LP

There's a very interesting sound going on here with this band from Richmond, VA. I am not very impressed with the cover-it-all-with-fuzz style that is still surprisingly overused these days. NERVE CITY has that sound, but the way they use it seems to emphasize the songs more than just simply cover them up. Maybe it's because these were recorded 2007 and 2008 before that



fad got out of control. This LP sounds at times like it could be an alternate soundtrack for *Repo Man*. Reverby, surfy Spaghetti Western-style tunes with a twisted country-ish singer. There is something uncomfortable and unbalanced to the whole thing, and I like it. (CK)
(Sweet Rot)

NERVE CITY – "Red Tops' EP

Like a lot that's been coming out on HoZac lately, Richmond, Virginia's NERVE CITY mines the lo-fi vein pretty deep, burying their songs in echo, distortion, reverb and whatever else they can to make it sound like they're playing at the back of a cave. It's a sort of BLACK LIPS effect, taken to the next level. While NERVE CITY has a bit more teeth than some of the other lo-fi bands around (that is, they aren't quite a sit-down, sing-songy band [yet]), the distortion/reverb gets to be a distraction, like it's more about the effects than the songs. A sure hit for fans of DUCHESS & THE DUKE. (IS)
(HoZac)

NIBIRU – "War Before Extinction" EP

Old-school grindcore/death metal from Texas. Guttural vocals, medium-paced, no frills, raw and heavy. Reminds me of early Earache bands like TERRORIZER and CARCASS. Dark lyrics dealing with politics and war. I think two of the guys were early members of INSECT WARFARE. Good stuff. (MH)
(Rescued From Life)

THE 99ERS – "And Then There Was Surf" CD

A charming full-length of indie rock meets amateur punk mostly on the topic of surfing. A mix of gal and guy singing that reminds me of the POPGUNS and HELEN LOVE. Dare I say "bubblegum"? And the fact that they're from Minnesota, you gotta respect their enthusiasm for waves. Very cool. (RL)
(Spinout)

THE 99ERS – "Stand and Surf" CD

Sugarcoated surf—I think influenced punk, if I even dare use this word. Your two-year-old might like it; unfortunately for this band I wipe my own ass and only wear diapers on a Sunday morning. (SD)
(Spinout)

NONCENS – "Society" EP

An exact re-ish of this '83 Swede classic (well, it's got different labels than the original, but whatevs). Not quite as thrashing as some of the others from the time and place, e.g. MOB 47, ANTI-CIMEX, S.O.D., etc., but it definitely has its moments, like the track "Don't Give Up," which is a straight ripper. The majority of the other stuff is somewhere between that more classic Swede HC stuff I mentioned before and bouncier shit like ASTA KASK. Until today, I knew nothing about these nubs beside what they sounded like and when they were from. A good, non-obvious reissue. (JU)
(Smrt)

NORTON – "Long Walks on Short Piers" LP

Very well produced melodic hardcore from Switzerland that is sung in English. It's kind of emo at times, but there are some slightly political moments on this album. It's not totally introspective and their sound is along the same lines as the "heavier" stuff Fat Wreck Chords puts out. There is nothing that really grabs attention; no song is really memorable, they all kind of blend together by the third or fourth track, and the lyrics are not very thought provoking. *Long Walks on Short Piers* is neither good nor bad, just kind of…mediocre. The most memorable, lasting impression is the cover art that features a wallpaper of three girls involved in a "three-way kiss," leaving me wondering if the dudes in this band are chauvinists or just boneheads. (FS)
(Rinderherz)

NORTHERN TOWNS – "Good as Gold" 10"

I love 10" records! So this release is already looking good to me! From the appearance of the band and the claims of classic punk and mod influences, I was a little bit disappointed as I think NORTHERN TOWNS falls into more of a post-punk/hardcore style. Not that it's bad at all—they're really friggin' good at what they're doing! There is an overall matured feel to this in the musical composition and the lyrics, and the combined talent of this band is evident from the collective experiences of these San Diego punk and hardcore veterans including former members of OVER MY DEAD BODY, DRUG WARS, SWINDLE and CHEAP SEX. (ML)
(Swagger City)

NO SHAME – "Ironing Day" LP

Cool! I had never heard of this band before, but with some quick research I see that they are a Finnish punk band that formed back in 1999 and have numerous releases under their belt. Even before my little Google search, it was evident that these guys weren't a vapid punk-by-numbers band with song titles like "Born in Submission" and "Fuck the System" and a gnarly assault rifle on the album cover. These guys definitely have something to say and there is substance to this album! Included with the record is a 20-page booklet including all the lyrics—every last incendiary word—almost like a manifesto! This reminds me of LEATHERFACE or the SUBHUMANS at times both musically and style-wise, which in my opinion is a big compliment! (ML)
(Full Steam / Rookie)

NOTHING PEOPLE – "Enemy with an Invitation/Reinstall"

NOTHING PEOPLE, from Nowhere, California, specialize in vacant, cold-wave punk that draws from a variety of influences. Side A evokes GARY NUMAN jamming with WARSAW, while the track on the flipside is more droning and (dare I say) industrial sounding. It's a cool little record: it comes packaged as an invitation, in a sturdy white sleeve with gold embossed lettering. Fairly limited, so get in there quick or go straight to eBay. (AM)
(Permanent)

NOT SORRY – "Moving On" EP

Tuff youth crew hardcore from the reputable Seattle scene doing what rainy day/pissed edgers do best: *crush*! Reaping the benefits of extensive study of the Revelation Records back catalog, NOT SORRY stays faithful to the style of hardcore that keeps us in the pit and singing along. The furious pace is a constant through each track, taking short rests only to break it down, complete with bass scale or guitar lead. A nice blend of traditional sounds and contemporary aggression—I'm in. (RM)
(Lifeline)

NUMBER 9 HARD – "All Lubed Up and Ready to Go" CD

NUMBER 9 HARD include a promo sheet to help me, the lowly reviewer, learn a little more about their band and tell me how they play shows all the time at punk venues with punk bands. They tell me that they take their infectious brand of punk/ska on the road all over the Midwest and that they gig in Wisconsin "constantly." Since I spent the majority of this band's existence in Milwaukee, I thought this was a little strange, 'cause I ain't never heard of 'em until now, but whatever. I hope you dudes have fun at the Rave and The Miramar, but might I suggest hitting up a few basements, 'cause that's where the punks are in Milwaukee, dudes. NUMBER 9 HARD listen to a lot of OPERATION IVY... like *way* too much. (WN)
(SBS)

THEE OH SEES – "Quadrospazzed '09" 12"

There seems to be a good amount of buzz around this band. I haven't heard anything other than this one-sided, one-song EP, but it seems they're going for an experimental/psychedelic rock sound. This is a 45 RPM 12" with one long, noisy song, lots of reverb and repetitive vocals that sound like they are saying, "I am on my way back home?" Maybe it's my short attention span, but this song seems to start up and drone on for a while. It has a short break in the middle where things quiet down for a bit before they get going again, but it never really takes off. This is a live recording and I'm guessing they are more of a live band than anything else. Oh, and it would be a shame if I didn't mention the beautifully intricate etching of faces and patterns that takes up this record's B-side. (BD)
(Castle Face)

ONE TRICK COBRA / S.U.S. – split EP

A split 7" between two bands from Texas. S.U.S. plays sloppy, chaotic hardcore. The vocals are buried in the blur of the music. Both tracks have a good amount of guitar soloing. One minute it sounded like straightforward modern HC, then they slowed down to more of an emo sound, and then for a split second, a blast beat. I like the chaotic feel. ONE TRICK COBRA's two tracks couldn't be farther apart. "Macho Sixth Song" has a speedy, in-your-face hardcore/thrash sound, but what's up with "Murder Rock'n'Roll"? A mix of bar rock, MOTÖRHEAD and punk'n'roll with a simple rock riff and gang woah-oh vocals. Ugh. (MH)
(TFC)

ORCHARD OF THE LIVING – CD

This is so far out of my purview that I don't even know what kind of music it is. Neo-screamo? Indie post-rock? Long, spacey melodic jams with half-sung/half-yelled vocals delivering political lyrics written like poetry. You might like this, but I really have no idea. Not my cup of tea. They probably have some songs up on their MySpace… (XV)
(Sickle Moon)

OVERNIGHT LOWS – "City of Rotten Eyes" CD

No-frills Southern garage rock, kinda like a snottier, brattier REDS or some of the early Rip-Off Records bangers. This genre is touch and go; it can either be generic yawnsville or bangin' as fuck. This falls easily into the latter as the band makes sure to sprinkle plenty of hooks throughout this blazing retard-punk. The "hit" for me is "Eyesore": "E-Y-E-S-O-R-E-R-E"… yeaaaahhhh. (TB)
(Goner)

PARALYZER – "Counting Catastrophe" CD

Totally ripping modern metal crust that would probably sit just as happily on a bill with SKELETON WITCH as they would with COLISEUM, and I would guess that the crowd would love them at either show. Well written songs that fly by, but still take the time to squeeze in a few amazingly short breakdowns and (almost dis)tasteful guitar wanking. The vocals make this one, though—always at the very edge of collapsing, like the dude is sincerely not going to have anything resembling a voice tomorrow, but that's cool, 'cause we still had tonight. Solid shit. (WN)
(Yep)

PIZZA / TIDELAND – split EP

PIZZA is one of the worst bands names ever…really, you want to call your band "PIZZA"? I don't really like their BARBARA MANNING lo-fi indie twee thing either. TIDELAND is a little more noisy and even have a slight KILLING JOKE guitar sound behind '90s-emo-meets-indie-rock rock. (AD)
(Cosmic Debris, no address)

LOS PLATANOS / VENEREANS – split EP

Two bands from Spain puke up some really cool early-style punk tunes. I can't say I like one more than the other; they are both really cool. If you are searching out some snotty ass punk 'n' roll, then check this shit out. Great party punk, so have your local punk DJ search this out. (MS)
(Superfluous)

POLYMORPHINES – "Transistor Sistor" CD

Yesterday morning, I listened to this CD while getting ready for work and all during the afternoon I had the images and sounds of great '70s proto-punk bands playing relentlessly in my head. You know what I'm talking about—the wailing guitars, huge hair, bellbottom jeans and lots of rock'n'roll swagger. More than the originals, though, this damn fine album brings to mind the MOONEY SUZUKI upon a second listening (in their better, early days). And like that band, the POLYMORPHINES throw down a perfect blend of classic rock and punk with a slight touch of blues while completely maintaining a unique flavor and sound. My favorite track here is "Dirty Cop" with lyrics like, "You used to be a high school jock / Nothing but a right-wing prop." The harmonica is put to use on this one and if you aren't fucking tapping your foot and digging the music, you must be dead inside! Those with a penchant for a dose of rawk in their musical mix are strongly encouraged to check this out. (BG)
(Get Bent)

POWERCHORDS – "More Than Me/Chemical Girl"

Possibly the most unoriginal name in popular music, but at least it's descriptive. The POWERCHORDS play the kind of tuneful, catchy pop-punk that is currently being peddled as some kind of power-pop revival. Think UNDERTONES or BUZZCOCKS, although the singer has a decidedly RUDI-tinged Irish lilt despite being from Chula Vista. "More Than Me" is my favorite cut of the two—it sounds more authentically '70s in its slightly out-of-tune harmony, not to mention the subtle BEATLES rip in the backing vocals near the end. It's good stuff, and my rigorous research uncovered the news that they have another single and a CD out already. Both are worth looking into, no doubt. (AM)
(Bachelor)

THE PSYCHO KID – "Hypocrite Land" CD

A new band in the world of RAMONES-meets-SCREECHING WEASEL masses. This is just OK considering the competition. From Chicago, this is probably best for the genre's completists and Chicago locals. (RL)
(self-released)

PU$$Y COW – "Drinky Birds" CD

This is really stupid, which is the intention. A healthy dose of stupid punk with one one-liner after another. This also includes a song called "I Love the Muffs" so I can agree with this band on one level. Basic, funny stuff that is amusing if nothing else. (RL)
(Chorizo Bonito)

PU$$Y COW – "Ride" CD

Really? I don't want to even dignify this with a review. I can't believe I have to spend the next 30 minutes listening to this garbage. Proof that anyone with enough money can put out their very own CD. Oh, and there's a secret track! This bag of shit will never end! (FS)
(Chorizo Bonito)

RAPEGOAT – "Man Cannot Be Saved" CD

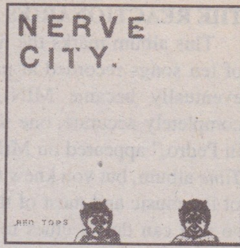
Questionable name aside, I would love to give this CD to a thirteen-year-old kid growing up in a religious household and watch the corruption that would ensue. There's a bit of a comic factor and a somewhat polished recording here, maybe akin to the kind of decent punk record some classic early '80s LA band would record today, but it's still pretty good. The lyrics take plenty of shots at organized religion in an irreverent and funny fashion, and I suspect they might be a product of the singer's own religious upbringing. (DG)
(Mystery School)

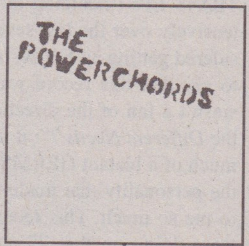
RATAS DEL VATICANO – "Chido" EP

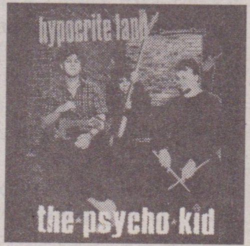
Fuck, this is kinda amazing and the B-side is even better. I was really anticipating this band's earlier full-length on Siltbreeze after the douchebag distributor/label onesheet claimed it to be the next KBD band (citing them to rival the SODS, MENTALLY ILL, GUILTY RAZORS, TAMPAX, etc.) and I was more than let down. After being assigned this record I revisited the LP and still am yet to make a declaration, but this 7" on the other hand I'm ready to get into fisticuffs with detractors and fully back it as they stand their own ground and are amazing. If this record were a vagina or butthole, I'd fuck or eat the shit out of it! (RR)
(Volar)

RAYMILLAND – "Recordings '79-'81" CD

One of St. Louis, MO's first new-wave bands. RAYMILLAND played eight shows in their short career, but there were some big ones. They opened for MAGAZINE, ULTRAVOX and CHELSEA. They were even scheduled to open for JOY DIVISION in Chicago. They officially released only three songs: two on a 7" that was included with copies of *Praxis* magazine and one song on the *Sub-Pop #5* cassette. All of those tracks are included here, as are their unreleased demo recordings and rehearsal tapes. Twelve songs in all. The music is post-punk prog: simplistic guitar, pounding bass, rhythmic drums and synthesized noises. It is obvious why they were chosen to play with JOY DIVISION. The singer sounds like a cross between David Bowie and Peter Murphy. Arty, theatrical and weird, yet strangely commercial sounding. (CK)
(BDR)







THE REACTIONARIES – "1979" LP

This album marks the first official vinyl release of ten songs recorded at practice by the band that eventually became MINUTEMEN. Well, to be completely accurate, one song, "Tony Gets Wasted in Pedro," appeared on MINUTEMEN's *Politics of Time* album, but you knew that. Mike Watt wrote all of the music and most of the lyrics for these songs, so you can detect clues to what was to come, but it's definitely a lot more straightforward and "punk" sounding. D Boon's guitar, as always, shines like a beacon through fog (sorry); Joe Strummer and Mick Jones as filtered through a childhood of CREDENCE CLEARWATER REVIVAL. All of the aforementioned happens on side one of the record. The flip has various combinations of folks from the San Pedro music scene (past, present, and future), including Watt, Jack Brewer, Todd Congelliere, Joe Baiza and George Hurley, performing versions of the REACTIONARIES' songs. Like the Pedro-centric zine *The Rise and the Fall*, this feels very much like a really fun community-building exercise. Let's face it: although an enjoyable listen, musically speaking, the B-side is fairly redundant and unnecessary, especially when presented right alongside the electric vitality of the originals on the other side. It does, however, serve as a kind of aural document of the tight-knit and lively scene in Pedro—an audio version of *The Rise and the Fall*, perhaps. Still, as a complete package, I'd go so far as to call this essential. (AM)
(Water Under the Bridge)

THE READIES – "Mink Dagger/ Medicine Cabinet"

Total NEW YORK DOLL/HEARTBREAKERS/STONES-like swagger from Mr. Dan Kroha, who you may remember from bands like the fucking GORIES or DEMOLITION DOLL RODS. Unlike the hundreds of others who've tried their hand at taking up the JOHNNY THUNDERS torch, the READIES keep it simple, clean and lean for maximum effect. I'm a sucker for this kind of rock'n'roll, when done right. And the READIES do it right. (IS)
(Cass)

REGULATIONS – "To Be Me" LP/CD

As someone who has listened to both REGULATIONS LPs (including the two 7"s of course) extensively over the last several years, *and* who considered getting an E.T.A. tattoo in my youth, I have to say that this record was generally a letdown. I wasn't a fan of the direction they were going with the *Different Needs* 7": it felt too contrived, like too much of a blatant GERMS rip-off, and with zero of the personality that made their other records speak to me so much. This record expands on what they were doing on that 7", and ultimately makes me think of them playing some well-lit bar with few old fans in attendance, sort of reeking of doing-it-for-it's-own-sake. There's also this sort of forced-eclecticism, especially in a lot of the intros, which doesn't make sense given that they've always known how to write good songs with natural sounding intricacies of their own. All of this said, if you were a fan of the *Different Needs* 7", chances are you might like this record more than me. It's also a little strange that Deranged sent an LP copy for the *MRR* collection and a CD as a reviewer copy (even opposed to no reviewer copy at all), but I suppose when your label is taking out color ads in *Vice*, you have to cut costs somewhere. (DG)
(Deranged)

RELICS – "We Owe Ourselves This" LP

Woah! Three-piece from Massachusetts doing heavy, mostly mid-tempo power/complexity stuff. These guys mix up intricate instrumental scenarios with brutish authority that could either hypnotize you or lead you into a headbanging frenzy! They do end up straddling the line between ADD brilliance and annoying song structure due to the lack of continuity on some tracks. But overall I found this a cool record that doesn't necessarily incorporate a lot of the regional trademarks most people recognize from the Mass hardcore/Clean Plate camps. Rather, they have a sound that finds its way somewhere between the sophistication of AMPERE and the chaos of PG.99. Simple but hand-assembled covers; only 300 pressed and they seem to be going fast. (RM)
(Galambis / Clean Plate)

RESIST AND EXIST – "Ad Liberty" CD

The '90s have always seemed too close for appreciation and not far enough away for nostalgia, but as distance grows, what was unique about the time period becomes more and more apparent. Half a primitive studio recording with thirteen unreleased songs and half a live recording, the CD from this early '90s MOB/CRASS-inspired SoCal peace punk makes for a "for fans" proposition at the outset—especially as the liner notes from one of the singers flat-out states "RESIST AND EXIST has always cared more about the message and less about the music"—but between mid-tempo, multi-vocalled, rudimentarily inept punk bashing, there's a spirit in these 24 tracks that somehow seems to have been lost in the last 20 years. This is most evident in the last ten tracks of live songs from 1992, which are simultaneously delightful, crazy, naïve, inspired, well intentioned and comedic as the band reads long diatribes about the patriarchy between songs, invites people on stage to burn the flag and announces that "this song tells everybody how we feel about war." It could be argued that these types of (at times cringe-worthy) diatribes caused a reaction that killed off a lot of the political orientation of the US scene, which I don't think quite views itself now as an agent for social change in the same way as the '80s or '90s—but in capturing that time, it's endearingly charming as much as inspiring. I wish the time had been taken to type out the lyrics to the tracks as well, as you never know what will be somebody's first punk record, but I think the intention was to make a nice collection and bonus for fans, and it's a mission well accomplished. (KS)
(Mass Media)

REY MUERTO – "Rey Muerto" EP

Totally inept yet somewhat charming punk from Spain. It's got the true eternal sound of punk, like it could have been made in '77 or '81 or '93—with no sense of any self-conscious intent—it's not some self-conscious, "Let's form a KBD-style band!" This is punk as it will always be. The singer has a little bit of a John Lydon yowl, the music sounds like it's just about to happen; I used the word inept in my first sentence intentionally. There are parts that remind me of an ESKORBUTO practice tape, then they throw in some total incongruous guitar dirge. The kind of record you put on, instantly hate, write off as half-assed shit, then realize it's great, then realize you know nothing about anything. (LG)
(Regresivos)

RF7 – "Acts of Defiance" EP

RF7 have been around forever, or at least since around 1979, and have put out some, but not a ton of records. This four-song EP looks like it was recorded in 1980 and, as far as I can tell, contains songs that have not otherwise been released. Most of the cuts here are on the slower side and have a sort of TALKING HEADS or GANG OF FOUR funkiness to them, without actually sounding like either of those bands. I imagine it will do more for some of you than it does for me. (KK)
(Puke 'n' Vomit)

ROLLERBALL – "Savage Eyes/Lay You Down"

I love what this label is doing! I haven't loved *all* the re-issues that they've done, but most of them have been amazing and if nothing else, they've managed to unearth some incredibly classic gems from the golden era of power-pop/punk/garage/rock'n'roll which is much, much appreciated, and this release is a definite hit in my books! ROLLERBALL was a pre-ELTON MOTELLO one-off studio project that has a pub-rock feel à la DR. FEELGOOD or LITTLE BOB STORY. The B-side has even more of a swagger to it reminiscent of the NEW YORK DOLLS/JOHNNY THUNDERS. Awesome! (ML)
(Sing Sing)

RUMANIA – "Fiesta Democratica" EP

This is my favorite kind of record: you will either absolutely hate it or fall in love with it, but it will never be background music. These four punks are from Madrid, Spain and, from what I could gather, are ethnically Romanian, but I could be wrong... Let me know dudes! This EP delivers some straightahead Spanish punk/street-punk/Oi. That might sound a little boring, but when you add the vocalist, delightfully sloppy moments and some chorus vocals that are just a little off, you get a great record. Many bands try to pull off this loosely played style of punk, which usually ends up sounding just plain shitty, but these guys nail it. The singer's vocal style can be compared to Jello Biafra's, seriously, almost right on. The sound of this record is distinctly Spanish punk in recording quality and style, but aside from the great music, their lyrics and attitude make them one of my favorites of the awesome punk coming out of Spain today. They are snotty enough to be fun and the lyrics are dripping with irony—not the kind that makes you want to slap someone's stupid mustache off their face, but the kind that allows you to have a healthy laugh at serious and terrible situations without being a callous asshole. Get your hands on it! (MB)
(Ayuntamiento de Madrid)

RUSSIAN ROULETTES – "R&R" LP

It's blown-out, raw, garage-y rock'n'roll from these Aussies. Think DIRTBOMBS, RIP-OFFS, etc.: well executed, but with much more pedestrian songwriting than either of those bands. The A-side

seems to go on forever, and all the songs just run together. The B-side is far more interesting, with a ten-minute jammed-out epic, a blistering HENDRIX-style WILLIE DIXON cover (the album's high point, unfortunately), and a full-on Phil Spector wall-of-sound pop song, but overall I found this record to be a bit of a let-down. With less cod-garage and more of the B-side experimentation, they would be onto something. (AM)
(P. Trash)

SABERTOOTH SNATCH – "Project Sherm" EP
When I say this six-track EP is has low production values and the music is kinda sloppy, I mean it more as a descriptor rather than a criticism. *Project Sherm* is the product of a weird mix of nerdy sci-fi and burnout drug cultures. The music has elements of punk, metal, prog and more, while the lyrics and art tell the twisted tale of a spaceship that runs on PCP and the misadventures of its debaucherous crew. Not really what I'm looking for in a record, but maybe you'll love it? Limited to 500 copies on frosty-nugz-colored vinyl. (CS)
(Goin' Ape Shit)

SCHIZOPHASIA – EP
After releasing a stream of short and stunning demos over the past couple of years, SCHIZOPHASIA finally makes a vinyl debut. I have to say that most people would absolutely hate this, but for those diehard few who love their punk noisy, chaotic and challenging, this is an absolute must-have. The actual recording is reminiscent of the Z *Violence Action* flexi—very trebly and thin with everything blown out but the bass. The songwriting is more in the early GAI vein, while a few of the slower and creepier moments recalling RUDIMENTARY PENI. The more traditional punk sounds are bracketed by and interspersed with more atmospheric pure noise, a bit of experimentation that works for SCHIZOPHASIA in a way that it rarely does for others who attempt the same. I suppose you could call them the MAN IS THE BASTARD of the noise-core scene? Great cover on this EP with all text in Arabic for some aesthetic reason or another. Limited to 500, so start looking now. (AU)
(SMRT)

SCREAMERS – "7-7-77: Pat Garret Demos" LP
Really high-quality bootleg, and when I say quality, I *mean* quality. One-sided with a tasteful screen-print, top-notch sound quality and packaging, limited to 300. I'm iffy on bootlegs of a band never "properly recorded" but this thing sounds like a proper fucking recording to me—I'm smiling and I don't smile often when reviewing records in this fucking dump. Also, in case any of you morons were wondering, the SCREAMERS are fine with this bootleg being released, and how could they not be? Buy this immediately (if you can). (BB)
(bootleg)

SHADOW OF THE TORTURER – "Marching into Chaos" LP
Wow, this is not what I was expecting—very metallic doom with the heaviness of BURNING WITCH and the pace of more "active"-sounding doom bands like CATHEDRAL or YOB. While I haven't listened to a lot of stuff in this genre lately, I actually find myself quite enjoying this. The riffs aren't breaking any new ground, but they're appropriately devastating and the low/high vocals are nice and evil (is it just me, or do I detect a bit of Jim Konya SCHNAUZER/ALL THAT IS EVIL/ etc. influence in the vox?). There's a nice sort of SAINT VITUS tribute part at the end of "Alone at Night" as well. (AU)
(Blind Date)

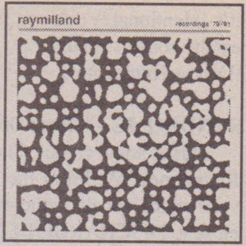
SILENT WAY – "Wound" LP
Brittle, jangling, and tuneful punk rock that owes more to late-'80s/early-'90s college rock than to 1-2-3-4 RAMONES riffing. Think fIREHOSE, SUPERCHUNK, TRUMAN'S WATER, and DINOSAUR JR, though not necessarily all at the same time. I get the impression that everyone in the band contributes to the songwriting, and you definitely hear that there are a few disparate styles going on. It means they don't really sound like anyone else, and makes for a refreshing listen. More, please. (AM)
(Silent Way)

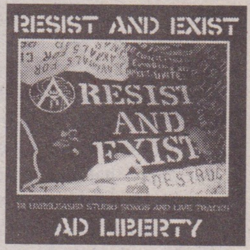
SOTATILA – "Vituiks Meni" EP
Hailing primarily from Finland (with Austrian roots), SOTATILA never fail to deliver the goods—usually close to MELLAKKA, but taking cues from mid-'80s hardcore. Eight songs here, and the standard is uniformly strong, with thundering guitars taking the fore. "Miks Sa Elat" may be the standout, with its enraged HÇ energy and arresting songwriting. Outstanding, as you'd expect. (SS).
(Kämäset Levyt / Plague Bearer)

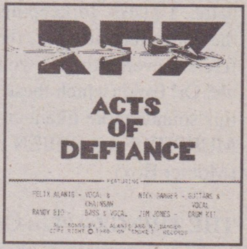
SPIDER – "Back to the Wall/Down & Out"
This label is saving us record tweakers a bunch of scratch by faithfully reissuing long-lost power-pop/punk bonzers. SPIDER was a total no-mark power-pop/NWOBHM band that released this one impossible-to-get 7"er, and it's a stormer. (Later the band went "rock" and released some other shit...but the debut is the jam!!!) Tight and precise power-pop in less than two minutes a pop. Bish bash bosh. Good shit, and the cover has to be seen to be believed...only in the '70s!!! (TB)
(Sing Sing)

SSR – "Orwellian Future" EP
I totally dig this record. We reviewed their LP *Nuclear Nation* last month, and I gotta say that I like this EP better (although I am going to have to give that LP another few listens now). The SSR (SEDITION SUB ROSA) looks like CCR on the cover (CREEDENCE?). It's pretty much D-beat, but don't let my saying that fool you... Yeah, it's medium (definitely not mild) fast, but they definitely play around with tempo enough to make it interesting, though not unrecognizable. Their bass player: what in the fuck? Let me go on record saying that I have only heard maybe two other current bass players (one being Al Murton from DISROBE) that can play with this much style. If I ever see him, I am buying him a shot. The recording lets you hear every note this dude plays, and it's worth it. There is a lot of high end to the guitars, and the riffs are all about getting the point across and less showing off with a fucking over-the-top solo every ten seconds. There are also some wanky parts that seem to work in some songs better than others (very few that are maybe a little too punched in sounding?), but when solos do appear, they are creative and fit the song perfectly. The drummer is all power, doesn't fuck around, but like the guitarist, when he indulges with fills, they are a balance of precision and chaos. The lyrics are all right, but they have some shining moments and are a hell of a lot better than most bands in this genre. I like that they include both personal and social themes and the shit rhymes! The vocals are echoed, scream-y, high-pitched yet throaty and definitely anguished. It all comes together to make a great chunk of songs, every one of them—the sound of creeping, controlled chaos. The last song on side B, "They Divide" is my new jam. Get this record, play it a few times and see what it does for you. As for me, I gotta see these guys live. (MB)
(Desolate Legacy)

LOS STEAKS – "No Moon Album" LP
This is a lo-fi release from this Spanish band with a definite retro sound similar to the FEELIES, NOBUNNY, the BLACK LIPS, etc. Personally, this isn't up my alley as I find that the intentionally minimal quality of the recording (at least I think







it's intentional?) detracts from what could be very catchy songs… (ML)
(Discos Humeantes)

SYNDROME – "Total Disarmament" EP
This is some classic Clay Records worship from Richmond, VA. From the pocket sleeve to the reverb on the vocals to the meaty recording, this is as close to DISCHARGE/BLITZKREIG/VARUKERS as you can get from a 21st century band. This record is so punk that the vinyl should have studs and spikes on it. There are a couple of moments where they pick up the pace and the spell is almost broken, but the B-side tracks are nearly damn perfect. This is one of the better releases in this style since WARCRY's *Harvest of Death* EP. (AU)
(Desolate Legacy)

TEN PINTS IN – "Raising the Bar" CD
I'm a pretty open-minded guy when it comes to music, but I might have hit a wall with this release. TEN PINTS IN from Long Island is an obviously talented group of musicians who play tight punk rock, but with the overbearing focus on beer and drinking, this verges on shtick and comes off as a bit of a novelty act. This isn't the first group to write a song about Guinness or drinking, or the first band to use plenty of imagery in their artwork to celebrate the joyous act of getting drunk—however… I don't think that there is a song of the twelve on this CD (coincidence that there are *twelve* songs?) that is *not* about drinking, and from the pilfered Guinness poster art on the front cover to the CD tray card image of numerous empty beer mugs, this is all a bit too much… We get it. You guys like to drink! But that should have been obvious enough from the band's name, I guess. In keeping with the redundancy of the songs and artwork, the music is not much different—even though I would expect this from a cliché Oi! band (which these guys don't appear to be), this sounds more like a cross between DROPKICK MURPHYS and GREEN DAY to me… (ML)
(Mother Box)

THE THINGZ – "Los Cosas Del Norte" EP
Very reminiscent of SOUTHERN CULTURE ON THE SKIDS. "Monkey Song" sounds like a boundy JIM KWESKIN JUG BAND number something like SCOTS might have done it; "CANNED BEER" sounds like a rather plodding nod to LINK WRAY (I put it on 45 first and it was perfect at that speed, but the next song was a vocal number that didn't benefit from the sped-up treatment). (DD)
(Coffee Addict)

TOXIN III – "I Rock I Ran (Again)" LP
If you missed the Hyped 2 Death or Rave-Up reissues, here's your chance to get TOXIN III's early-'80s output. The song you know (and probably love) is "I Rock I Ran" (which kicks off *Killed By Death #8.5*), but unlike a lot of the KBD band reissues that get spread out over a whole album, TOXIN III's other songs more or less hold up, especially if you can get down with bands like the SHIT DOGS. None of them are nearly as storming as "I Rock I Ran," but even the later tracks that start leaning towards a new-wavey sound (think early SUBURBS maybe) are good. (IS)
(Burka for Everybody)

TRUE – "Still Life" CD
TRUE (a self-described crust/death metal band from Croatia) won instant points with me for the intro to this CD that sounded like music GOBLIN might have written for one of the better Dario Argento films. Indeed, throughout the CD I found the more atmospheric moments (many of which feature tasteful keyboards and tambura) to be more memorable than the heavier stuff. In their heavier moments, I found that they had more in common with early black metal à la GEHENNA's *First Spell* than death metal, perhaps because of the constant trem-picking and the trebly influence of the tambura. Not bad, though the tunes are a bit long for my taste. The shorter tracks, especially "Massacre," are the real standouts. (AU)
(Geenger)

TV EYE – "Nice People" CD
Woah, this album has 31 tracks! Luckily, they are all fairly brief. TV EYE mines the RAMONES/SCREECHING WEASEL/QUEERS vein of fast, poppy punk with smartly dumb lyrics. All the songs follow the same formula, but surprisingly I didn't really start getting bored until track 24. That's something of a personal record. (AM)
(Hoax, no info)

U.D.I. – LP
The initials stand for UNIDENTIFIED DRUNKEN INJURY, which is appropriate for the booze-filled, nihilistic thrash that these dudes throw down. There are stylistic nods, not to be mistaken as imitations, toward mid-'80s crossover thrash like the ACCÜSED and SEPTIC DEATH, even F.O.D. The lyrics are hate-filled and the venom is pointed towards everything dumb in American society. The singer has a cool vocal style that flows through the wall of the thrash, blasting from one track into another. The first listen of this album had me mentally dismissing it as OK, but I ended up spinning it several more times and really started digging it. Pretty damn good. (BG)
(Spider Cuddler)

UNFUN – "Pain Prescription" EP
This is not at all what I expected, assuming this band's name is a JAWBREAKER reference—UNFUN doesn't really sound anything like JAWBREAKER. These six songs have a really beefy (but not heavy) sound and that perfectly lo-fi recording quality that I absolutely love. Overall, it's late-'90s Midwest sing-along, sweaty, over-crowded-basement pop-punk (longest descriptor ever?) that's best taken in whilst imbibing large quantities of your favorite cheap beer. This is the kind of-pop punk that I'll never get sick of. (BD)
(Lost Cat)

UNITED MUTATION – CD
You are probably familiar with this DC band that was around in the early '80s; if not, here's your chance to get acquainted with a group that was doing some pretty creative and out-there shit in hardcore for the time. One half of the CD is their first release and highlights their straight-up hardcore roots coupled with Mike Brown's distinct style of raspy, guttural vocals that have always sounded to me like Cronos of VENOM and the precursor to GISM. Yeah, there is a Pee-wee Herman part, but hey, at least he is trying shit out. The music sounds like a combination of every era of POISON IDEA, from *Pick Your King* to *Feel the Darkness*, but a lot less solid. The second half of this CD is their *Rainbow Person* EP, which gets into some uncharted territory, stretching the definitions of hardcore. There is a musical quality similar to KILLING JOKE and some BAD BRAINS moments—even the vocals get a little HR at times. There are definitely times where I was asking, "what the hell am I listening to?" that shifted to "this is a killer song." If you are into packaging, be warned because it's pretty crappy, but don't judge, because the music is definitely worth a listen. You don't have to like it, but you have to appreciate the boundaries they were pushing at the time—sometimes very successfully, as some of these songs are awesome. (MB)
(DSI Archives)

VEM BRYR SIG? – "Va Fan E Re Nu Ra" EP
VEM BRYR SIG? has a curious name and a story to match. They began playing in 1979, but made their name with a new lineup a year later before calling it quits. But this Stockholm band reasserted itself in 2008, gigging with the legendary GRISEN STRIKER. Musically, they work best playing mid-tempo punk—though their material isn't wholly distinctive, with the sound not unlike '80-vintage EBBA GRÖN. You have to be thankful, however, to discover one of the more obscure outfits from the good old days. (SS)
(The Eye)

VENEREANS – "Future Primitive" LP
A funny amalgamation of punk and surf music. Surf music isn't really that complicated of a style, but some how these guys manage to dumb it down to a real primitive, plodding thud. The vocalist seems very serious, though he doesn't seem to be singing about serious topics. Put it all together and you get VENEREANS. It is a strange combination, but interesting nonetheless. (CK)
(Tic Tac Totally/Discos Humeantes)

VENEREANS – "Future Primitive" LP
Wow—this floored me on first spin. A great mix of weird, angular riffs and pounding beats, delivered with an almost offhand nonchalance. The rhythm section forms a solid base for the guitar player to explore some East-Bay-Ray-style leads, while the vocalist goes off on songs like "Burka for Everybody," "Don't Step Cockroaches" and the amusingly titled "Maybe Too High." They finish off with an unusual cover of UNITED MUTATION, if that gives you any clue to the twisted minds from which this Spanish band was conceived. Very cool. (CS)
(Tic Tac Totally/Discos Humeantes)

THE WANKYS – "American Wank" CD
This CD collects five vinyl releases by this Japanese-noise-punk-imitation act from the UK. For fans of bands with zero originality. (CS)
(Rescued From Life)

THE WARM JETS – "Wanna Start a War" LP
OK, here we got a band from Philly circa '79/'80 that's name is the only *Pleasure Principle* aspect of the entire record. The first side contains seven

songs—two taken from an acetate, four studio, and one live at CBGB's. The flip side was recorded entirely at Max's Kansas City. The more I listen to it, the more I like this record. Tons of attitude and a heavy dose of youthful vigor, panache and snot make this one of Rave-Up Records' (with the shitty artwork, graphics, no insert, and minimal info) better releases/boots. I wanna start a war indeed!!!!!! (RR)
(Rave-Up)

WE LIVE IN TRENCHES – "Modern Hex" LP

The Scandinavian group known as WE LIVE IN TRENCHES has turned out their first full-length album, one they call a "fix of reality" and the "soundtrack to your final hours"—which is in contrast to what I call "low-grade rehash crap." From start to finish, I found the record fairly bland, and at times eerily familiar. I viewed this it as an attempt to "next level" some shit, and it failed because of execution and identity. The music is post-punk that is (according to them) "ready to explode through the plasticity of your life" with heavy nods to crunchy/proggish bands from the past like the JESUS LIZARD or HOT SNAKES; they unfortunately end up channeling tired contemporaries like FUCKED UP and CLOCKCLEANER. The album never grabbed me and I felt like listening to one of the aforementioned bands instead… blah. (RM)
(P. Trash)

WETDOG – " Lower Leg" EP

Man, I have wanted records by this band since I heard their demo probably five or so years ago. Their first record did not ship to the US for some reason, and since they are British, it costs about the same as buying an eBay bonzer to get it shipped here. Anyway, in the tradition of LUNG LEG, WETDOG are an all-lady band that has successfully encapsulated the KLEENEX 7" for the modern age. Primitive punk with barks and shouts that bring to mind mostly the previously mentioned genre-defining ladies of Swiss punk… WETDOG can write songs; this isn't just a collection of yowls and howls, it's compelling and complete and makes me think of the best FALL 45s. That propulsive sound that I am unable to scrape off my turntable. The savage sound of the MONORCHID with no hardcore past? How she wrote elastic man?? This has persuaded me to bite the bullet and pay an insane amount for their prior LP. Their new records are going to come out on US labels I believe… (LG)
(Captured Tracks)

WORD FOR WORD – "Manchester Forever" CD

A collection of unreleased material and vinyl-only releases from this New Hampshire band playing fairly typical NYHC-inspired moshcore. All the obvious trademarks are here: chugga chugga fast parts, gang vocals, breakdowns, a CRO MAGS cover and a song that starts with "Bust it!" Well executed, but tired and all too forgettable. Even if this was my thing, I don't think it would stand out from the pack. (JH)
(Arrest)

YEAR OF THE PIG – CD

Six songs of weird, angry, downbeat stuff. Some fast parts here and there, but mostly it's doom and gloom heaviness with tribal drumming and growled vocals. The guitarist can shred but unfortunately the songs don't really go anywhere. Whatever. (JH)
(Spider Cuddler)

V/A – "Clone Vol. II: Play Slow, Die Fast"

A really insane release by Blind Date Records outta Germany, this is the second installment of what I believe will be a four-volume compilation, exclusively featuring sludge/metal/doom bands covering classic hardcore and metal songs from the days of yore! Standouts include GOLDEN GORILLA doing UNBROKEN's "Absentee Debate," THOU screeching through BORN AGAINST's "Well Fed Fuck" (they do a great job of not turning their version into a predictably slow and boring rendition; rather, they rip through it—relatively speaking—keeping the song punk and exciting) and MOLOCH opening the record with "Lightning Strikes" by RORSCHACH. The topper has to be HEY COLOSSUS pounding through a warped version of SUICIDAL TENDENCIES "Institutionalized"! Weird, chaotic and vaguely familiar, HEY COLOSSUS puts a whole new silly and sick spin on it. Finally, it would be criminal to overlook the four-star packaging by Blind Date. A thick slab of vinyl is tucked nicely into a heavy, die-cut and embossed sleeve with the *Clone* title. Not for the mildly interested, but if bands like LOSS or AGUIRRE are your thing, grab a copy. (RM)
(Blind Date)

V/A – "Denton, Denton USA" LP

It looks like this is what the city of Denton, TX has to offer, at least at this point in time. Interesting, and not at all bad. The tracks range from pop to odd to punk, back to odd and to indie. Highlights include SLAVE/MASTER, the PUMPERS, the WAX MUSEUMS, BAD SPORTS, FERGUS AND GERONIMO, FUNGI GIRLS and the TEENAGE BEES. Overall, this is really high quality. (KK)
(Play Pinball)

V/A – "I'd Buy That for a Dollar Vol. 1" EP

A compilation of four bands that have a similar new-wavy punk sound, yet each is fairly distinct and has a nice quality to it. The songs are catchy, quirky and synthetic. BLACK ORPHAN starts the EP off and has cool robotic vocals. MENTHOLS are next with teetering song and a pained singer. LEGENDARY WINGS do an extremely catchy surfy garage pop song. LOS STEAKS finish it up with keyboard-driven new waver. Great compilation. (CK)
(UFO Dictator)

V/A – "I'd Buy That for a Dollar Vol. 2" EP

Four bands and, I do believe from the title, all for a dollar. First up, CAVE WEDDINGS doing their lo-fi garage spin, catchy and to the point, not a trillion miles away from NOBUNNY and HUNX AND HIS PUNX. Second to the blocks, USELESS EATERS—another lo-fi exponent with a more darker feel, close to the FUNCTIONAL BLACKOUTS and HUMAN EYE. I'm liking. Third up, GUT REACTION—more lo-fi but with a hint of psych and krautrock and that repetitive drone that I'm all over—nice. WANTON LOOKS prop up the basement with a nice little lo-fi garage-pop number, sort of like NODZZZ meets CHEAP TIME meets a nice wall of distortion. Thumbs up and not one filler track. (SD)
(UFO Dictator)

V/A – "Our Boy Roy" LP

The Roy in question here is ROY ORBINSON. Yes, it's a tribute album of ROY ORBISON songs done by "garagey" kind of bands, if that's what you call 'em these days. Features plenty of big hits: JACUZZI BOYS ("You Got It"), TY SEGALL ("Pretty Woman") CHEATER SLICKS ("Crying"), RED MASS ("Running Scared"), TEENAGERS ("You're My Baby"); and some of the lesser-known hits: HAUNTED GEORGE ("Rock House"), BLOODSHOT BILL ("Cause of It All"), DEMONS CLAWS ("It's Over"). All in all, a decent comp. Enough variation in bands/styles so it doesn't become a blur of samey covers, but not so totally all over the map that it's disjointed and unlistenable. But it's still a bunch of covers…I'd reach for my real ROY ORBISON records over this any day. (IS)
(Telephone Explosion)

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Amplified Noise: amplifiednoiserecordings.blogspot.com
Arrest: PO Box 1102, Manchester, NH 03105, www.arrestrecords.bigcartel.com
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Better Half: www.betterhalfrecords.com
Big Action: 915 Scheffer Ave, St. Paul, MN 55105
Blind Date: PO Box 6302, 79039 Freiburg GERMANY, www.blinddaterecords.de
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Chorizo Bonito: 224 N. Avenue 55, Los Angeles, CA 90042, www.myspace.com/pussycowtheband
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Coffee Addict: www.thethingz.com
Contraorden: www.myspace.com/contraorden
Cutthroat: www.myspace.com/cutthroatrecs
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Puke 'n' Vomit: PO Box 3435, Fullerton, CA 92834, www.pukenvomitrecords.com
Ravachol Prod: futurenoir.propagande.org
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Rebel Time: www.myspace.com/rebeltimerecords
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Regresivos: www.discosregresivos.com
Rescued From Life: PO Box 14821, Haltom City, TX 76117
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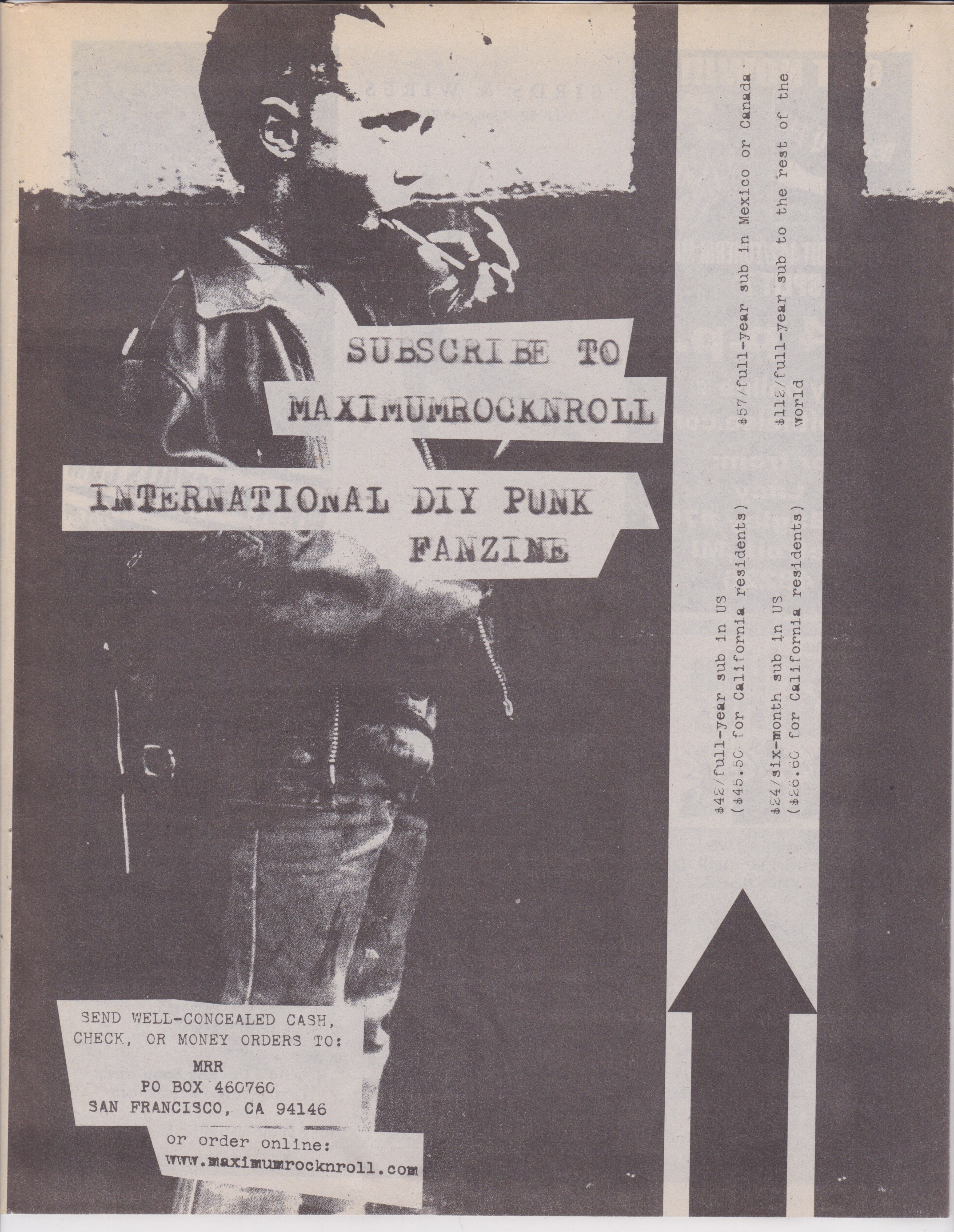
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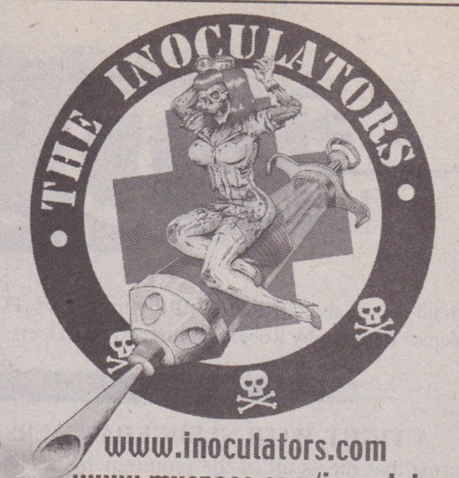

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DEMOS

Send demos and CD-Rs to: MRR attn: Demos, PO Box 460760, San Francisco, CA 94146. Please provide a postpaid price and a mailing address with your demo! Reviews by Robert Collins and Dan Goetz

A FIGHT WITH SLEDGEHAMMERS – Powerful apocalyptic crust that meets all of the requirements a band might need to fall into that category: pained vocals that are slightly more emotional than angry; downtuned crushing riff action; melodic guitar leads tastefully applied under the vocals...you get the drill. Black shirts, patches on their tattered ballcaps—it might sound like I'm making fun, but I'm just trying to show you where they are coming from. The recording is blown to shit (or it could be my speakers), and that makes them even more awesome. Me like. (Robert) (8 song CDr, no lyrics, $3ppd from 3827 West Chestnut Ave., Altoona, PA 16601)

APE! – I hear that bass and I can't not think about KARP, so instantly my ears perk up and I take notice. This is all of the fuzz that I actually liked about the early '90s (AmRep, Sub Pop and the like) but with a *way* heavier modern delivery and the vocalist sounds as much like Mark Arm as the bass player sounds like KARP. This shit is awesome, and while I've dropped old references, it sounds totally fresh. Heavy forceful tuneful psychedelic brilliance. If you aren't scared of rock 'n roll, then this is great shit. (Robert) (9 song CDr, no lyrics, myspace.com/weareape)

BLITZKRIEG WITCHCRAFT/DOOMED TO EXTINCTION – Two Salt Lake City crust bands teamed up on one disc. BLITZKRIEG WITCHCRAFT play '90s crust a la DYSTOPIA, The second track, "I Support The Invasion" is a killer funeral dirge and the rest of the shit has an appropriately unnerving feel. DOOMED TO EXTINCTION are a blur of four track powerviolence fueled death metal. Lo fi as shit. (Robert) (9 song CDr, some lyrics included, $4ppd from PO Box 521174, Salt Lake City, UT 84152)

BUBBLE GUN – The first of two noisy piles of shit from the good folks at Spent Planet this month. Drum machine, acoustic guitar and inescapably catchy songs, even the kazoo is endearing. (9 song cassette, no lyrics included, "a few bucks" ppd c/o 100 Condor Street #2C, East Boston, MA 02128, spentplanet@gmail.com)

CHEMICAL THREAT – Singsong UK punk rock. Plodding mid tempo political stuff with "follow the bouncing ball" style vocals. This is pretty standard fare, they call it punk. (Robert) (5 song CDr, lyrics included, $8ppd from 82 Ivy Road, St. Denys, Southhampton SO17 2JD UNITED KINGDOM)

THE CHOKE – Cheesy, overproduced "rock revival" crap with a "sexy" female vocalist and songs like "Murder at the Arcade." This demo was recorded at three different studios, including one in the UK. These songs are registered with BMI, so I suppose the royalty checks will start rolling in soon. (Dan) (11-song CD, lyrics not included, www.myspace.com/thechokenyc)

COLD SNAP – Slow dark and anguished screamo stuff..is there a genre called "funeral emo" like "funeral doom?" Cause this would be in that genre. But then they speed things up on the third song and COLD SNAP sound more like your average modern HC band with nice slick guitar leads and vocals that sound more pained than emotional. Good songs, great guitar tone, makes me feel kinda awkward. (Robert) (4 song CDr, no lyrics, myspace.com/coldsnapct)

ESCALATOR – A crushing juggernaut of low end frustration with extra chaos. This reminds me instantly of HINCKLEY; swells and eruptions with burly low end vocals and self conscious delivery. A chaotic version of early HIS HERO IS GONE with more emphasis on the testosterone. If you like it tough and dirty, then this is your jam. (Robert) (4 song cassette, lyrics included, thefuckingdiscoveryzone@riseup.net)

EVERYTHING WENT BLACK – Four songs of ultra polished new school hardcore from St. Louis. Super heavy and completely professional (though they are only seeking a "semi–professional" label for the release of their upcoming full length, according to their bio). Mostly mid tempo with crushingly weighted breakdowns and properly anguished but still posi vocals...fans of MODERN LIFE IS WAR and RISE AND FALL take note, this is not punk at all, but other than that it's great. (Robert) (4 song CDr, lyrics included, everythingwentblackstl.blogspot.com)

FLAT OUT – After the godawful moshy intro, this demo gets slightly better for the next 11 songs. They play a modern hardcore/metal/grind hybrid that screams "well-produced CD-R demo," and the screams themselves alternate between throaty and more yelled hardcore. The grind parts are actually decent and competent, and the production works in the favor of these parts alone. (Dan) (12-song CD, lyrics included, myspace.com/flatoutflatout, iwilldestroy1015@gmail.com)

GIFT HORSE – Complete '90s worship (AVAIL, JAWBREAKER, PROMISE RING, JAWBOX, and there's even a TEXAS IS THE REASON cover to seal the deal). Any attempt at this vocal style (sung, but with extreme emotion while not screamed...you know, like an actual artist) needs to be at least this good or the result is very bad...the result here is good. Fans of the decade mentioned in the first sentence of this review should order this. (Robert) (3 song cassette, lyrics included, xgalambisrecordsx@gmail.com)

GIVE UP – Order this NOW. Albany is a hotbed of killer hardcore, and a lot of those bands have roots dating back to this five piece bulldozer that was around until 2003 or so. Songs from their '99 demo, both EPs (including the unreleased one) and a blazing live set from 2002. Fast as fuck burly intelligent hardcore punk with just enough action on the guitars to jar your senses and make you go "Holy Fuck!" every few songs. This is seriously crushing, and they pulled no stops with the packaging so act now...I can't believe no one has properly reissued all this shit. GIVE UP rules *hard*. (43 song CDr, lyrics included, $6 plus postage, www.peterwalkeeerecords)

HOBOCOP – It's like THE SPITS were getting drunk with SOCKEYE and someone found a bunch of acoustic guitars and they tried to play blues rock. The vocals are fucking horrible but in that (almost) cute way. All this is great, but unfortunately my fantasy party turned into an after bar and someone scored some blow and the whole thing went on for almost half an hour and it got less retarded and more "good" as it continued. For HOBOCOP, I prefer them when they are awful, cause it's awful in a good way, you know? (Robert) (13 song CDr, no lyrics, myspace.com/hobocopmusic)

HUMILITATE – Blistering metallic thrashcore on a cute little 3" CDr. Dual vocals, and one of them has the perfect NYHC "I'm spitting

vocals at you in short bursts" delivery which is odd for this kind of music, but when juxtaposed against the burly scream for the other dude, it totally works. This stuff is ultra heavy, and the songs fly by with crossover speed, but this still sounds Spanish...like if SIN DIOS morphed into MUNICIPAL WASTE. Weird, but it works. (Robert) (6 song 3" CDr, no lyrics, $6ppd myspace.com/humilitate)

INJUSTICE SYSTEM – Pick a tag for this one: call it fastcore, thrashcore, powerviolence, hardcore, youth crew? I could care less, because the shit FUCKING KILLS. Start/Fast/Stop/Faster...that's the formula INJUSTICE SYSTEM stick to throughout this tape and actually, now that I type their name out, *Blood, Sweat and No Tears* and the first SOIA EP are a pretty fucking good comparison. This is tight...I'm not sure what that means, but the cool kids seem to keep saying it about things that are good, and this is really fucking good. Well worth your dollars, put 'em in the mail now. (Robert) (4 Song cassette, lyrics included, $33 ppd c/o 3202 N. Rome Ave., Tampa, FL 33607)

INTERRACIAL LOVE TRIANGLE – Guitar/drums duo playing raucous twisted country punk. It's fast, it sounds like it was recorded in a toilet and there's one song on it. I'm sold. (Robert) (1 song cassette, no lyrics included, no contact info)

KLOWN – A faux live demo of a KISS worshipping bar rock band covering KISS songs. They do a pretty good job, and the dude has Paul Stanley's voice nailed. (Robert) (19 song CDr, no lyrics, but do you really need them?, $10ppd www.myspace.com/klown)

KRANG – Dual vocal metalcrust assault from Chicago. Five long, doom (the feeling, not the genre) laden, rampaging tracks attacking war, animal cruelty and humankind as pathetic whole. If your tastes lean towards SCATHA, MASSKONTROLL, REACT, NAUSEA, then might I suggest the new demo from KRANG? (Robert) (5 song cassette, lyrics included, c/o Adam Blann, 959 S. Yates, Kankakee, IL 60901, myspace.com/krangcrustards)

LA VOZ – *Fucking awesome* hardcore from Southern California. I feel like I'm listening to LIFE'S HALT for the first time. LA VOZ might not be quite as life altering as LH were, but these tracks get my blood boiling like fucking crazy. There are (at least) two different sessions on the demo, and while it's weird that they put the shitty sounding stuff at the beginning, it kinda rules...Matt and I put this bad boy on after we saw them a few weeks back and just as soon as we got used to the ultra raw boombox recording, we got our fucking asses blown off by the final three studio tracks. Upcoming EP on Lengua Armada, get into it. This band rules. (10 song CDr, no lyrics included, no contact info)

LIMBS BIN – One man noise project that manifests itself as aggressive electronic hc/grind. Most of the tracks here are blasts clocking in well under 30 seconds. Fans of noise punk along the lines of BLOODY MIINDED take note, those searching for traditional punk or hardcore steer clear. In addition to the demo you get a 7 song, 3 minute live "set." (19 song CDr, lyrics included, c/o Josh Landes, PO Box 0559, Hampshire College, 893 West Street, Amherst, MA 01002)

THE MAINE COONS – Were it not for the delivery, this would be a cheap JAY REATARD/REIGNING SOUND jerk fest with extra 50 MILLION sauce, but this shit is more blown out than the early DISCLOSE demos, and the result is a glorious trainwreck. Awesome freakout nonsense here, not for the faint hearted. The first five songs are all about male ejaculatory fluid...but in a fun sort of way, while the whole B side is live (and yes, it is even noisier). (Robert) (11 song cassette, no lyrics included, "a few bucks" ppd c/o 100 Condor Street #2C, East Boston, MA 02128, spentplanet@gmail.com)

MORBID ABORTION – This is like the full band version of JUD JUD. There's a dude hitting something to simulate drums, but all other instruments come from the mouth, including the guitar solos. Fucking funny, especially with songs like "Teachers Must Die," "Satan's Cum," "Regurgitate Your Date," and my personal favorite, "Poo." For the record, there is no need for 70+ plus minutes of this, I stopped while I was still laughing. (Robert) (37 song CDr, some lyrics included, $6.66ppd from www.morbidabortion.org)

POPULATION CONTROL – This band sounds like a million other chuggy and melodic modern hardcore bands with screechy vocals, but there's a passion and aura of discontent that has me liking it when I'd be bored by similar sounding bands. The recording is also punk enough to make things sound better as well. (Dan) (6-song CD, no lyrics included, www.myspace.com/populationcontrolfuck, danking_82@yahoo.com)

RAD COMPANY – Punk on the vaguely melodic/pop side of the spectrum. Think GOB (Canada) with '90s Mike Ness singing playing the non–acoustic AGAINST ME stuff. There are moments where they start to get "heavy," or at least more aggressive, but these seems more like humorous interludes instead of stylistic divergences. Sing along opportunities galore here, all songs come from previous records and demos. (Robert) (18 song cassette, lyrics included, c/o 659 Carlisle Ave., Dayton, OH 45410, barkquackmoo@yahoo.com)

SCOTIA WIDOWS – Killer, ultra catchy mid tempo punk with teeth from Chicago. The female vox are the highlight (sweet, pretty, more pop than punk, but it works), but the guitar starts worming its way into my heart after a few tracks...then I realize that the band is PEDESTRIANS and DAYLIGHT ROBBERY folks...yeah, no wonder it's awesome. SCOTIA WIDOWS are more straight forward rockin' punk, but if the songs are good, you don't need anything else! (Robert) (6 song CDr, no lyrics, www.myspace.com/scotiawidows)

SEXUAL JANITOR – Fun, almost-inept teenage punk that sounds like the band is still learning to play together, but with ridiculous catchy songs. A lot of them are about sex, drugs, or both, and I'm guessing the female singer didn't pen a couple of these songs with lines like "she caressed my nuts" or "can't get off without dustoff, it really gets my rocks off." It's juvenile, but all in good fun. (Dan) (8-song cassette, lyrics included, generalinterestpunk@gmail.com)

THE SICK NEEDS – Basic three chord bar punk from Canada. Raw demo recording and songs about televangelists and being frustrated with life. (Robert) (5 song CDr, lyrics included, www.myspace.com/thesickneeds)

SILENT WAY – Jangling guitars and vocal melodies are at the forefront, but the focus is good times and tuneful punk rock. There's a definite 90s influence, equal parts JAWBREAKER and mellow college rock stuff. Tracks here from a 2009 EP and an early 2010 demo; not my thing, but it is nonetheless engaging. (Robert) (8 song CDr, no lyrics, www.myspace.com/slientwaynb)

SWEETH TOOTH – Mile a minute skate thrash from Shitsville, Illinois just east of St. Louis. Equal parts street fueled hyper thrash and frustrated grind violence, these dudes blast through eight songs before I can even remember that I don't skate. This might be the best demo I've heard all month, might I suggest that you get a copy of your own as soon as possible? I would give you mine but...well, I won't, because I want to keep it. (Robert) (8 song cassette, lyrics included, $2ppd c/o MM, 1142 Illini Drive, O'Fallon IL 62269)

TELECOMMANDE – Instantly addictive drum machine backed two piece from France. The music is a little "pop punk," but when mixed with the primitive sounds from the fake rhythm section and the odd blips and beeps, it scores a grand slam in the bottom of the ninth. Silly, infectious party music, highly recommended, and you can download the shit for free if you are too cool for cassettes (hint: *nobody* is too cool for cassettes). (Robert) (3 song cassette, no lyrics, 6128frustration.blogspot.com)

THATHIANA KHANKHANA – Groove laden mid tempo heavy rock from the Basque country. The vocals are varied (screamo shreiks, crust growls, grunge howls) and the rhythms are close to early TODAY IS THE DAY minus the faux grind. These dudes can all play their

asses off and the packaging is minimal but impressive. (Robert) (7 SONG CDr, no lyrics, $5ppd myspace.com/thathianakhankhana)

TOUCH ME SATAN – Tuneful melodic mid tempo punk from Seattle with a singer who's voice is instantly engaging, even though I am not as drawn to the discordant music. I don't want to drop a comparison as lofty as Mia Zapata, but three songs in and that's the voice I keep coming back to, while the music is early 90s era SONIC YOUTH with Riot Grrl thrown in for good measure. This is pretty good. (Robert) (5 song CDr, no lyrics, www.myspace.com/touchmesatan)

TROOPS OF TOMORROW – "Now I'm running with the kids // the ones who shave their heads clean // they're looking for trouble // I'm looking for release." Mid paced three chord street punk attack from the DC suburbs with equal nods to Oi! and hardcore. (Robert) (6 song cassette, lyrics included, no contact info)

WILDDOGS – Spanish female fronted grind/crust. The vocals are what make this stand out, but the more I listen, the songs are pretty exceptional, though I could do without the bits that lean towards the metal side of grind. Add a touch of mid tempo rock 'n roll on the last song, throw in a tasteful bit of melody, and you have a killer demo. (Robert) (3 song CDr, lyrics included, www.myspace.com/laswilddogs)

XANTHAR THE MAGNIFICENT & MURRAY THE RADD – Ahhh, computers. Now anyone with a bedroom can make their very own "punk rock" demo. Plodding 4 track "genius" that goes from SQUIRREL BAIT to SUICIDE in two songs flat, and then moves on to THE REATARDS covering NEGATIVE APPROACH. The flip side (MURRAY THE RADD) is just layered guitars and vox playing over self–indulgent closet rock. (Robert) (12 song cassette, no lyrics included, allmyfriendsaredead@live.ca)

YIKES! A LION! – I blame this band and their acoustic guitar entirely on AGAINST ME. I would like to blame them on BILLY BRAG (I'm sure that they would love that too), but this is totally AGAINST ME's fault. (Robert) (6 song CDr, lyrics included, myspace.com.yikesalion)

ZERO PROGRESS – Dirty hardcore punk from the Bay Area. This kinda reminds me of BROTHER INFERIOR (mostly the singer) but musically it's more full speed ahead charging get the pit started and pound yer fukkn beers fist in the air punk fukkn *RAWK*...pretty good shit, and I figure they are only gonna start writing even better shit if they keep it up. (Robert) (9 song cassette, some lyrics included, www.whichsiderecords.com)

ZERO PROGRESS – Fast and bulbous Bay Area hardcore, pretty much the same review as the nine song tape, except that this one is rawer and, as a result, sexier and more dangerous. (Robert) (4 song cassette, no lyrics included, 0progress.blogspot.com)

v/a – WILD WILD WEST – The "West" here is Western Massachusetts, and this tape covers the whole fucking spectrum of bands from that region. Banjo/violin down home duo ZAC JOHNSON starts, then comes WHITE PRESSURE who sound like FRANX FERDINAND, GIFT HORSE ('90s wannabes), downer country from MUDLARK, SQRM (painful raw hardcore), DANGUR (burly east coast HC), crushing modern HC from RELICS, mellow reverb drug sounds close out Side 1 in the form of YAK SNOT. And Side 2 is just as varied: VACCINE and LOW CHARACTER (heavy plodding hardcore), GUILT LUST sound kinda like FUCKED UP but not as self indulgent, THE CRYSTALLINE ROSES sound like their name, DARK MASTER are complete black noise, more banjo crap from THE OFFAYS, modern tech metal new school emocore from AMPERE and some crushingly powerful emotional sludge from WASTELAND to close out the tape. (Robert) (16 song cassette, lyrics included, www.galambisrecords.webs.com)

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There is so much useful information in here- from how to build a wood-burning stove to DIY dentistry, and it's even laced with a bit of conspiracy theory to protect and provoke the reader. This issue contains some correspondence with other sea and homesteaders, and is definitely related to lifestyle tactics detailed in *Dwelling Portably*. This is an all-ages manual for freegans everywhere- acting as both a resource for aforementioned how-tos, as well as an info share reproduction and distribution catalog. I will definitely be ordering back issues. Note; there is no paper wasted on double spaces and tab allowance, so it reads a bit maniacally. I like. (DS)
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A decent first issue of this zine out of New York state that covers the D-beat/raw punk side of things. Perdition, Nerveskade, and NY natives Koward, Syndrome, and Dawn Of Humans are all interviewed, with the author asking general questions and the bands offering detailed answers. He also offers up some short histories and discographies for some of his underrated favorites from the '80s: Part 1, Vorkriegsphase, Svard Parad, and the Iconoclast, who I think are a bit more well known. The layout is pretty derivative but still competent in its execution, and everything is done with plenty of enthusiasm and excitement. (DG)
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ANGRY VIOLIST #1
4.75 x 8.5 – copied – 15 pages
This zine sums itself up best at its beginning. "This zine is for string players who are angry at being forced to play classical music; who yearn for something more interesting than the standard repertoire; who are tired of being stuck in the old Classical srraightjacket; who like to (or want to) make ugly and/or non-conventional, experimental sounds with their beloved violin/viola/cello." The author talks a bit about his own classical training and getting over the guilt he initially felt for making unconventional sounds, offers a primer on the bow and different ways it can be used (including with guitars, including a note equivalent guide!), talks about the role the violin and viola played in folk music, as well as other string players who came up with their own styles. A great read, even for non-violin players. (DG)
angry.violist@yahoo.com

BALD CACTUS #27 / 3$ppd or trade
5 x 8 – copied – 28 pgs
Bald Cactus is very much the same style as her British brother *Gadgie*, but I prefer *Bald Cactus* because it contains less rambling on about football (soccer). There is one article that touches on the subject, so I skipped it. In addition to the short essays and reviews, there is an interview with Burnt Cross. I am currently reading the Crass book and sensed a similar defensive stance taken by band members. They defend their anti-Christian statements and ideas well in both the book and here, in the case of Burnt Cross—seeming justified rather than pig-headed, and I have a sustained respect for them both. Now back to *Bald Cactus*, it's not totally engrossing but well compiled and fun to read. (DS)
Bald Cactus Distro / c/o 145-149 Cardigan Rd. / Leeds LS61LJ UK
baldcactus@gmail.com

BARRICATA #20 / $5
8.5 x 11 – printed – 76 pgs en Francais
Trois ans de Francais en école did me no good really, I mean, I can barely read any of this. Harkening back to les études, je n'ai pas une idée que cette magazine has to offer. I can sense from the pictures and headlines that it has a political bent, and thrillingly a wide cross section of underground cultural coverage varying from punk to hip-hop to anti-colonial activists in theatre, photography, academia, and more. From what I can grasp, there is a heavy theme of the examination of the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. There is an interview with an anarchist photographer named Keren Mano, who stays I think in Tel-Aviv, and documents what happens on the frontlines in the West Bank. Another interview focuses on Michel Warschawski's activism in Israel, there is also a conversation with the zine Cartouche, a health worker in Gaza, a band called Heyoka, plus an apparel company and a rap group, and tons of reviews of records and zines. Hard to tell precisely but it looks trés magnifique. (JB)
Barricata / 21 ter, rue Voltaire / 75011 Paris / FRANCE

BASIC PAPER AIRPLANE #3 / $3 US, $4 World, Free to Prisoners, Trades and Stamps Welcome
5.5 x 8.25 – copied – 32 pgs
This is sorta librarian punk style now... The author has a very earnest and direct way of communicating; his enthusiasm for his subject matter is extremely evident. There's a piece on the history of the postal service, which ends with the fact that his mom is a postal worker and since she doesn't live in a city she had to pay for her own vehicle, which seems unfair. Did you know that the reason the post isn't delivered on Sundays is because of pressure earlier this century from churches due to declining attendance? There's a rumination on cop killings that also touches on working at a bookstore, the Kindle and fanzine culture. Sort of all over the place... Like a conversation. Joshua and his friend, the writer of the zine *Jesus Chris Superzine* go to the *Utne Reader* magazine award ceremony, where they have a nomination for zine of the year. He captures the inanity and business deal handshakes that go on at any industry meet up. The overall theme behind this zine seems to be about finding the human connections in everything the writer encounters. (LG)
Use Yr Words / PO BOX 2645 / Olympia WA 98507
sleepingsilent@hotmail.com

BROKEN PENCIL #46 / $5.95
8.5 x 11 – printed – 64 pages
This professional-looking magazine out of Canada seems to cover "indie arts and culture" in a general sense, with an emphasis on zines and the literary, but I feel like it's more by and for the kinds of college educated, alternative newspaper reading gazers that would, say, consider Etsy a "DIY cultural phenomenon." The pieces on "Nerd Girl Pinups" and "The Indie Store Revival," are good examples of this, among other lukewarm articles and columns, though Allison Wolfe's arti-

cle on the Riot Grrl zine archive at San Francisco's very own Goteblud zine shop is a worthwhile read, and I found the cover story on funding cuts to the arts in Canada to be informative, especially since I had no idea how much federal funding the arts received there. There are also some excerpts from a few comic zines, and extensive book and zine review sections (both divided in categories, no less) that I imagine would be the most useful aspect of this zine. (DG)
PO Box 203 / Station P / Toronto, ON M5S 2S7, Canada
www.brokenpencil.com

BURN COLLECTOR #14 / $6
4.25 x 6 – printed – 156 pgs
Well, well, well, here is a fat book of Al Burian's musings on public transit (travel), bike culture (more travel), street music (leaving one's regular *space*), a house-show scene report as argument for expanding both mental and physical exploration (again, traveling), existentialist travails, loneliness—urgency—fuckery. I find most dramatic were the revelatory exclamations of the power of Ned Dirlik's drawings akin to the magnitude of the influence of Greg Ginn. Yes, comics abound amongst this collection of writing, sometimes directly accompanying it, adding to the messages in an illusory manner, sometimes thwarting your attention because it exists separately from it, fighting over the focus of your pupils. Get this: "Where Clowes echoes the fears of my parents' generation—that you have to grow up sometime, that you have to decide on one area of focus and master it in order to succeed—Brinkman is a prototype of the new way of the idea of expanding instead of contracting your interests as a means of survival." *Fuck yes.* This section prevails in my memory as the relevant parts sticking out furthest from-page-to-brain. My impression of this kind of writing is that it is running along boundaries of godless nights, sleepy days, nerve endings on fire, always pushing, always allowing a measure of cynicism to fall back on because failure as climax is so imminent we pretend we were expecting it all along. (JB)
Microcosm Publishing / 222 S. Rogers St. / Bloomington, IN 47404

CHILENA COMANDO # 6 / 4 euros
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 64 pgs
This is a Spanish language fanzine from the people of the Burka For Everybody label in Spain, that is mostly made up of interviews with some comics and an ending list of a bunch of random books, movies, records, events etc... of which the authors wanted to include. The layouts and artwork are very esthetically pleasing. The interviews are thorough, interesting and informative; they make me want to get to know more. To name a few interviewed: Galactic Zoo Dossier, Skjit Lars, Billy Bao, The Ex, Chefa Alonso (female free-jazz groundbreaker), Jess Franco (awesome Spanish horror/sex director), Gepopel and more, covering a good mix of film, music, art etc... If you like zines that cover stuff other than punk, but are interested in artist, musicians, and the like, who share the DIY spirit of punk in their own realms, this is the zine for you. Warning to nationalist shit heads: they even have an article about Robert Anton Wilson, so watch out!! It came with a CDR of music that is covered in the interviews and then some (including a song by Montañas called "Calamares gigantes en Luarca" that rocks!). Overall, this zine is extremely well done and it definitely shows. I went online to try to get the previous volumes, but they are sold out!! ARGH!! It comes out once a year, so if you are a Spanish speaker or trying to learn, get it now!!!!!! (MB)
burkaforeverybody.com/chilenacomando.htm

CLASSY PEOPLE #2 / $3 or trade
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 64 pgs
What if you kept a diary filled with brief descriptions for every show you've attended within a calendar year? Well, that's the deal here, and it's quite fun to read along and get a glimpse of a Midwestern scene from one person's perspective. The excitement of seeing great bands that blow one away is balanced by the many letdowns of going to shows, such as cancelled headliners or terrible opening acts that often shouldn't even be playing a punk show in the first place. But worse, there are the punk legends who continue on past their prime and seeing them becomes depressing. For the writer this occurs when seeing the Zero Boys twice results in a new outlook on that band—and it ain't good! The same is felt for MDC. And for newcomers Deep Sleep, they get referred here as "the most mediocre band" seen during the year. Ouch! I dig Deep Sleep, but maybe now I don't feel so bad about missing the Zero Boys reunion show last year. Anyway, reading this thing makes me want to start going to more shows. (BG)
Micah Jenkins / 5502 Sleet Dr. / Indianapolis, IN 46237 / vomax25@hotmail.com

EARTH FIRST! Vol. 30, #2 / $ 4.50
17 x 11 – printed – 32 pgs
Earth First is a long running journal that serves as a sort of central meeting place informing like-minded people of current events and issues, as well as including some comics and poetry to add some nice variety. I'm sure you would agree that what these folks accomplish is much more punk than wearing your fucking Vans retro sneakers and owning a couple of rock and roll records. Some punks end up in jail for pissing in an alley or stealing beer. That's pathetic. Some environmental activists end up in prison for standing up and resisting corporations and industries from wantonly obliterating our delicate ecosystem for profit. That's conviction. Check out an issue and see what's going down. (BG)
Earth First! / PO Box 3023 / Tucson, AZ 85702 / www.earthfirstjournal.org

ENDLESS DISAPPOINTMENT / $?
24 x 18 – newsprint – 2 pgs
You know when you vomit over and over, and you can't stop, until you are vomiting what feels like your stomach lining, a bitter mucous like substance. Bile. This is a poster sized zine compiled by two people, a girl called Jax and a man called Gabby. The writing style is reminiscent of the literature found in places like the Youth Attack internet forum, one of the many avenues available for kids to vent their fury over subjects such as colored vinyl and who said what to whom. *Endless Disappointment* contains a lot of self-conscious vitriolic rants in which "homos" and "faggots" surround the writers, as they innocently attempt to eat coconut rice dream and enjoy the musical stylings of Devour and Video Disease, whilst disdaining the "metrosexual... chick hardcore" sounds of Sex Vid. The disdain felt for Sex Vid is quite maniacal, it sort of veers into conspiracy theory talk, like reading someone lose their shit over some alien abduction 9/11 Obama tea party connection that apparently the rest of the world is blind to. The bassist, Sue's appearance is insulted in classic kreepy misogynist style, which made the rest of the zine seem like putrid garbage. Apparently most of the prose is courtesy of a 35-year old man, who wants to wipe out the crust population of the upper west side of NYC, and also watch hockey with his bros. I am sure there are a million angry old men in sports bars across the continent who share his opinions of fags and women, and it's always sort of mysterious to me why dudes like this get into punk when their views are so obviously reflected in mainstream culture. (LG)
64 Oxford St / Toronto, ON M5T 1N8 / CANADA

FLUKE #8 / $2
5.5 x 8.5 - copied - 68 pgs
There are no ads or reviews, but we are treated to interviews, aphorisms, a few more "personal" style pieces, and a tour diary. If you're bummed on punk being too stagnant, you may be stoked to read the discussion with Andrew Jackson Jihad, an acoustic two-piece from Arizona. The tour diary results from the editor tagging along with them throughout Southern California. Also interviewed is Christ On Parade, who talk mostly about the old days, perhaps understandably, and a pair of Little Rock kids. Paige Hearn skates tough and manufactures boards, while Alan Short is just down with the LR punk/metal scene. One poor guy writes about having cancer, and another guy writes about his Army buddy quickly becoming incarcerated upon returning to the States. The Army guy is quite sympathetic to his buddy's rough deal, both while enlisted and after, but doesn't mention that *maybe* the folks whose country they invaded got it worse. Overall this zine is packed with writing and is pretty well done. (JM)
PO Box 41931 / Tucson, AZ 85717

FOR FEAR THE HEARTS OF MEN ARE FAILING / $0.50 or stamp
8.5 x 14 – copied- 1 pg
If you sat on a street with a fair amount of foot traffic and reported back what each person was doing in one short line and then complied them all onto one horizontal piece of legal paper and left the other side blank you would have made the zine *For Fear the Hearts of Men are Failing.* While I thought it was interesting, I would more expect to see this wheat pasted on a wall than folded into an envelope but hey, why not. (CR)
3088 King St. / Berkeley, CA 94703

GREENWOMAN #5 / $5 US, $2 to female prisoners, trades OK
5.5 x 8.5 - printed - 60 pgs
Another hearty issue has reached us already. Much of this one is given over to the editor's job diary. For the first time in a while she's performing paid labor outside of her house, gardening in the yards of (who else?) the rich. Her writing is engaging enough that I was interested in what happens, even though she discusses a number of un-punk topics (or are they?). Her business and social relationships with other women, which plants are the raddest, and which peppers resemble male genetalia are among the topics broached. A few contributors contribute material also in this vein. This issue doesn't have as much hands-on advice as the others I've seen, but is still sweet if this is your scene. (JM)
Sandra Knauf / PO Box 6587 /
Colorado Springs, CO 80934-6587
www.sandraknauf.com_a.google.pages.com

IZU GIROA #15 / 2 euro, trades
8.5 x 11 – printed – 52 pgs

I know that Basque is not the most common language where we come from, but I really wish I could read it, cuz this zine looks badass. *Izu Giroa*, translated as "Climate of Fear," is a fanzine from Basque country, Spain that is jam packed with music, music, music! The content is primarily band interviews, including Limp Wrist, Sulfators, Motocross, Imperial Leather, Yo soy Julio Cesar (an old school Basque punk/new wave band) and more... There are a whole bunch of record reviews, zine reviews and, my favorite, show reviews. Its black and white with a simple layout and a bunch of live shots and cover scans. I got on the phone with a friend of mine who understands some Basque and I tried to read, in my broke-ass accent, some of this zine. Between the two of us, and hours later, we got through a small part of the record reviews and a few show reviews. I tried! (MB)
Izu Giroa / PO Box 10216 / 48007 Bilbao Basque Country / SPAIN
izugiroa@hotmail.com

KID CUTBANK #3 / $2.50 or trade
4.25 x 8.5 – copied – 36pgs
What I am getting out of this zine is a balanced view of idealism, energy, and a critical look at education, the meaning of life and refusing the dismal offerings of survival in a suburban dead zone. I love the herb reference checklist, interview with a radical educator who has a brilliant analysis of a new approach to teaching kids, the pictures, abandoned building exploration, roof-sitting, etc... dream on, kid, dream! Up the banx. (JB)
Ben / Hoodrat-militia@riseup.net

LEARNING GOOD CONSENT / $3.50
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 46 pgs
OK, yeah, I get how verbal consent is important but this zine basically builds an idea that the only way to have sex is by constantly "checking in". Like, this zine spends a lot of time talking about ways to ask for consent from a partner but doesn't really give any tips on how to say no. Personally, I think it's way more important to figure out how to say "I like that" or "I don't like that" rather than "is this ok?". The otherhuge problem I have with this is it does the whole "the attacker needs healing too" thing. There are probably a couple people who have sexually assaulted someone and they now realize that was fucked and that they have some shit to work through. Maybe. However, the majority (basically all) of rapists are TOTAL FUCKING SCUMBAGS. I don't see why a community should take responsibility to "heal" their local sexual predator. FUCK THAT. Scumbags should be CHASED THE FUCK OUTTA TOWN. (MM)
Microcosm / 222 S Rogers / Bloomington, IN 47404

MYCOFFINHANDS #2 / $12
5.5 x 8.5 – copied – 24 pgs
This is a really cool zine of drawings and stuff with a nice screen printed cover AND a pull out screen printed poster. Most of the drawings are pretty doom–y and super detailed. Super–limited, like only 25. Try topick it up.(MM)
mycoffinhands.blogspot.com

NUTS! #3 & #4 / $2 or trade
35 x 11.25 – newsprint – 24 pgs
These are great examples of how a local zine can represent a punk community without being middle of the road or square. *Nuts!* is based in Olympia, and is full of art (including some from my fave Oly punk artist, Lauren Likely) and random local ephemera, along with interviews with local bands, like Milk Music and White Boss, and former local band Nodzzz. This is Olympia, so as well as the picture of the modern dance troupe there's a photo of Sex Vid's last show, and some rad stick and poke tattoos... You know, all inclusive—for the feminists and the greasy scumbags, and the greasy feminists. I think my favorite thing about these zines is the way that there will be someone's handwritten list of the best places to see shows in Olympia, next to a guide to some guitar trick, next to some brutal Void style psychedelic art damage. Judd's reviews of every restaurant in town sort of reminded me of classic Oly zine *Germ of Youth* for some reason. Tobi Vail writes a great piece about meeting Mike Watt, and his impact on her ideas of growing older and staying punk and so forth. Anyway, these are full of ideas, shitty art (in the best sense of the word) and the crummiess and radness that makes fanzines compelling... Making the mundane transcendent and the transcendent mundane. (LG)
PO BOX 7302 / Olympia, WA 98507

PEARLS BEFORE SWINE FLU / THIS IS PLAGUE CITY / $3 US, $2.50 CAN
4.25 X 5.5 – copied – 28 pgs
This is a little zine out of Toronto—a split between two writers of fictional short stories. What these stories have in common is their loose theme of plague and disease in the writers' home city. I guess I'm not that into random fictional stories, so I had a hard time getting into this collection, but I could see why people might find some meaning in these stories. There is a palpable sense of morbidity and unease to the first collection, while the second reeks of sexiness and sensuality. These themes seem quite pertinent given the mainstream public's obsession with the flu and illness. (DA)
PO Box 1093 Station F / Toronto, ON M4Y 2T7 / Canada
dave@woodenrocketpress.com
bitsofstring@yahoo.ca

PLASTIC BOMB / #69 / 35 Euros
11.75 x 9 – printed – 80 pgs – German
Plastic Bomb is a long running German punk fanzine, probably a little more mainstream than the one you are currently reading, in that it's full of cheesy adverts of punker girl costumes with Betty Page haircuts... This is all in German, which I cannot speak or understand beyond some basic stuff from my school days, but there are interviews with about fifteen different bands, ranging from Press Gang to So Much Hate, and there are a few articles that seem to have more of an activist stance, one on a demonstration and another that seems to be about women and immigration—though I may be wrong. The cover image shows a woman leaning into the camera, her stance somewhere between tough and provocative, with a black eye and what looks like vomit coming out of her mouth. I found that somewhat questionable.... (LG)
www.plastic-bomb.de

RAT'S EYES / $2
8.5 x 11 – copied – 14 pgs
This is such a rad example of inspiration seen through to the finish. This dude obviously likes the styling of our own sweet mag, *MRR* and her ilk; so, he decided to make his own personalized version. The layout makes sense for the hardcore punk fanzine- Intro, interviews and reviews. Bloodclot Faggots are featured and Pathetic Human. There is a comic at the end. The end. (DS)
Richard Costa / 717A High St / Thornbury 3071 / Victoria, Australia
rcosta_700@hotmail.com

RAZORCAKE #54 / $4
8.5 x 11 – printed – 114 pgs
This issue of Razorcake provides its loyal readers with a glimpse into the minds of beloved Bay-Area Brits, Young Offenders, who discuss everything from touring and their eclectic tastes in music, to their kids and their personal lives. This issue also follows up on the piece in #53 about the life and death of the giant underground music distributor, Mordam. And for all of you pop-punk heads out there, the editors at *Razorcake* have thrown in a hilarious interview with the Dead Milkmen, who have not given up on playing shows. There is also an interview with So Cal hardcore ragers, Death Crisis, plus tons of columns and reviews. (DA)
Razorcake / PO Box 42129 / LA, CA 90042
www.razorcake.org

SAVAGE FOREST / no price listed
4.5 x 5.5 - copied - 88 pgs
The writing in here is the kind that's difficult for me to really get a grip on. While not as dreamy or ethereal as *Keep Loving, Keep Fighting*, the author here similarly describes situations somewhat obliquely. I'm left feeling like heavier issues are kept at a distance while she more-plainly describes her immediate environment. Many of these pages are devoted to her trip to East Africa; Utah and New York City (her home) also appear. I'm not particularly sympathetic to privileged folks slummin' it in desperately poor countries, but for this trip she travels with someone who knows people there (including actual Africans) and speaks a local language, so many times they crash in somebody's house. The design of the zine is pretty sweet—the text is mixed nicely with illustrations and photographs. I'm not super excited about this zine, but I do think some kids reading these reviews would be. (JM)
Dani Golomb / 517 W. 121st St. #7015 / NY, NY 10027 / dmg2112@columbia.edu

SCREAMING AT A WALL #3
8.5 x 11 – copied – 28 pgs
It seems like print zines focusing on hardcore have been coming back in a big way. I'm all for it. We need more pissed-off straight edge zines. It probably sounds like I'm kidding, but I'm not. "The militant edge is no joke." I have to say that I'm surprised that this zine is on its third issue and this is the first time I've seen it. This is the kind of thing that our kindly taskmasters here in the *MRR* slave labor camp usually slip under my cell door in the dead of night with a "review this by mid-month or face our wrath" note attached. I'm not familiar with several of the bands interviewed here (namely Alert, No Minion and Troops of Tomorrow), and I know of Rival Mob but have never listened to a note of their music for some reason. The editor does interview one band I'm familiar with though, namely Waste Management, whose 7" on Painkiller is worth tracking down. The interviews were mostly on the shorter side, unfortunately, especially the one with Waste Management, which was less than two full pages. The rest of the zine is filled out

with the usual reviews and band photos, as well as a one-page "Comic Book Corner." It's a nice idea, although I personally haven't followed any of the X-Men titles for over a decade outside of the runs written by Grant Morrison and Joss Whedon, so I can't comment on his descriptions of the "Messiah War" or "House of M" storylines. This is a good effort. There's some definite room for improvement, but I'm glad zines like this are out there. (VX)
Bobby Westfall / 1206 D St NE / Washington, DC 20002
robertxwestfall@gmail.com

THE SECOND SKIN OF CITIES: PHOTOGRAPHS OF STREET ART IN HOUSTON / $5
5.25 x 3.5 – printed – 24 pgs
This is a small photozine by David Ensminger of *Left of the Dial* fame. The title is pretty self-explanatory but this is a little compilation of various street art, ranging from crude tags, box car graffiti to political stencil art and flyers. There are a few paragraphs inside touching on whether these works indicate gentrification, the transformation of a neighborhood with the paintbrushes and rent checks of art students or the opposite, a neighborhood in ruins. The last piece in the zine is a painting of a couple that sorta resemble a Chris Johanson painting, you can't tell if it's naïve street art or a *Beautiful Losers* consumed art student. (LG)
2301 Norfolk St #1 / Houston TX 77098

SELF AWARE #5 / $3 ppd
8.5 x 11 – copied – 32 pgs
Interesting. Along with the usual batch of modern hardcore-ish bands I couldn't care less about (Touche Amore, Hawks, Stymie, Just Die!), this issue includes an interview with Outlaw Order. For those who might not know, Outlaw Order is pretty much the entire line-up of Eyehategod with a different drummer, and they play a punker form of NOLA sludge. Definitely not something I was expecting in these pages. It's a pretty good interview too, although at only three pages it was shorter than I'd want it to be. Aside from the interviews this has a bunch of record and zine reviews, a couple pages of band photos and a list of someone's ten favorite Carolina bands. I actually agreed with half of his choices, which was a pleasant surprise. As always the zine is laid out quite well and looks good, there's obviously some effort put into this, which is admirable. If they interviewed more bands I like I could really give this zine my unreserved support. As it is, I'm sure plenty of kids want to read the interviews that I don't — how else to explain the contents of *MRR* every month? If we only interviewed bands I like circulation would drop drastically. (VX)
2537-F Woodbrook Ln. / Monroe, NC 28110
selfawarezine@gmail.com
selfawarerecords.blogspot.com

SELF–DEFENSE FOR RADICALS / $4.95
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 32 pgs
When I saw this for review I feared some hippie meandering, but this was actually really fucking good. Intensely informative, no fucking around, and even some theory stuff about how pacifism does not and cannot work in every situation. This was entertaining to read and included everything from detailed instructions on how to give a good left hook to rape statistics. Highly recommended. (MM)
PM Press / PO Box 23912 / Oakland, CA 94623

TOINEN VAIHTOEHTO #223
5.5 x 8.5 – printed – 30 pages
This Finnish zine features interviews with Armageddon Clock, White Flag, and Jarkko Martikainen; some record, show, and zine reviews; and some articles I could discuss more if I knew the language. In spite of the semi-professional look and layout here, this is a fully DIY effort with no semi-corporate or otherwise ridiculous ads or content. (DG)
PL. 1 / 65200 Vaasa / Finland

THE TROUBLE WITH NORMAL #98 / $2
5.5 X 8.5 - copied - 40 pgs
Consistency is something I prize, but not as much as *The Trouble With Normal* editor Boone. The ninety-eighth issue of his zine don't look much different than the thirtieth or fiftieth. The interviews are still pretty marginal. He's still going to shows and taking pictures. There's even a punk show this time. He talks with Joe Lally and a local band, Monte Carlos. His decade-recap focuses on federal politics and is a little soft on the current President. In the past, his political commentary was always a strong part of the zine, so this was a bit of a letdown for me. The show to celebrate the 100th issue of *TTWN* is already booked, so git yer ass to Columbia if you're down. (JM)
PO Box 1444 / Columbia, MO 65205-1444 / www.thetroublewithnormal.tripod.com

TRUST #139
11.75 x 8.25 – printed – 64 pgs
Even though I can't speak German, I agonizingly endeavor to "read" much of the content here because I absolutely love this zine and I can fortunately make out a little of what is being said on occasion (a few reviews and even a few lines within some interviews are appreciatively written in English, which makes my life a bit easier, I might add). What would make me go through such an undertaking? Well, if you have to ask you've never laid eyes on *Trust*, a fantastic German punk fanzine that has been going at it for some twenty five years. The layouts are always impressive, and the variety of cool band interviews, columns, articles, and numerous reviews make this publication one of the standard bearers for others to emulate. Some of the interviews featured this time around are The Last (LA), Kriegshög, Burial, and one of my all time favorites, the Youth Brigade (LA). Every issue I've ever come across is superb. You can check out their website for info on ordering some back issues. And it's a great way to learn German! (BG)
Trust Fanzine / Postfach 11 07 62 / 28087 Bremen / Germany / www.trust-zine.de

TURNING THE TIDE: JOURNAL OF ANTI-RACIST ACTION, RESEARCH & EDUCATION
Volume 23 Number 1
11 x 17 – printed – 8 pgs
More politics and theory from the LA ARA crowd. This issue features a piece on the Black Riders Liberation Party, interviews with Bogota, Colombia RASH (Red Anarchist Skinheads) and the leadership of Los Macheteros, a half-page article entitled "Beyond Identity Politics", an excerpt from *Theses on the Imaginary Party*, and the usual writings on the pigs, Israel, the Panthers and community radio. Reading this is like looking into an alternate universe I used to inhabit. Revolutionaries, one more step to become nihilists! (VX)
Anti-Racist Action Publishers / PO Box 1055 / Culver City, CA 90232

UNEMPLOYMENT / $2 plus postage
6.5 x 4.75 – printed – 48 pgs
This is a small (think Chick Comics tract-size, only taller by half) collection of personal writings from the author/editor of *Big Hands* zine. As you may have guessed, these writings deal with being unemployed. Self-doubt, the search for work, American politics and a dream in which the author faces judgment by a certain key CrimethInc. figure all play into the seven short chapters here. This kept my interest while I read it, but I prefer *Big Hands*. There are worse things to spend two bucks on, though. (VX)
Aaron Lake Smith / 1104 Imperial Rd. / Cary, NC 27511
Microcosm Pub. / 222 S Rogers St. / Bloomington, IN 47404

WET CEMENT #2 / $?
8.5 x 5.5 – copied – 36 pgs
This sarcastic and humorous zine had me cracking up as I thumbed through the pages, reading every word. No band interviews or record reviews here, just a collection of punk rock rants and mocking anecdotes cut up and pasted within a black and white layout that consists mostly of classic record illustrations (the rat and the garbage can from *New York Thrash*, the angry bald dude on the first Ill Repute album, etc.). This aesthetic effort makes the zine twice as good and a more likely contender for the "keeper" category. Another thing that makes *Wet Cement* stand out is the few like-minded contributions from other writers, which keeps this clear of being just some personal zine. My favorite part here was the list of things this guy will hate you for if you're guilty of just one infraction. I failed his test because I sometimes wear sunglasses, but I agree with most of his views. Hilarious. You should really check this out. (BG)
Jeff / 56 Franklin St. / Allston, MA 02134 / jeff@skitsystem.net

WHAT'S THE JAM #6 / $?, trade
5.5 x 8.5 – Copied – 34 pgs
Be warned, this zine is so relentlessly positive that it made me chuckle several times reading it and think, "are you fucking with me?" There is no swearing, not that its necessary, but the author uses "shoot" and "eff" instead of their obvious, filthy counterparts. The cover is hand cut and the layouts are all hand drawn/written. There are an impressive amount of record reviews, animation reviews, zine reviews, and, my favorite, show reviews. There are a few theater reviews, movie reviews, record store reviews, illustrations, a recipe, lists of movie to go to, you tube vids to see and a bunch of articles about subjects (Micheal Jackson, Jim Henson, Paul Reubens, *Breakin' 2*) that the author loves and just wants to show "apreesh" for. The drawings are pretty cute and sorta funny, giving it all a comic book feel. I can be a pretty crabby asshole, but I enjoyed this zine. All its about is someone having a great time, checking out a ton of cool shit and they wanna share it with you. Although I don't know how much posi I can take, I would read other issues of *What's the Jam* because it's a great example of someone that is taking advantage of the availability of cool things, staying positive and highlighting the constructive parts of punk life. There is a call for trades, penpals, reviews, etc... It seems very genuine and definitely put a smile on my face. (MB)
Tuna – What's the Jam / 1626 N. Wilcox Avenue 919 / Hollywood, CA 90028
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